



J. CUMMING, DUBLIN.

1841.

THE
SOLDIER OF LYONS;
A TALE
OF
THE TUILERIES.

BY MRS. GORE,
AUTHRESS OF "MOTHERS AND DAUGHTERS," ETC.

There shalt thou find one heinous article —
Containing the deposing of a king,
And cracking the strong warrant of an oath —
Marked with a blot damned in the book of Heaven !
SHAKESPEARE).

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P R Ê F A C E.

IN adding the Romance of THE TUILERIES to the collection of STANDARD NOVELS, it has been deemed advisable to restore to it the title of the SOLDIER OF LYONS, as more germane to the matter than the one originally selected by the publisher.

More than ten years have elapsed since the publication, — more than fifteen since the writing of this work, almost a first attempt in prose, to beguile the tediousness of a residence in a secluded château in France. No compendious history of the French Revolution had then appeared. Louis XVIII. was on the throne ; political opinion in a state of subservience. The works of Thiers and other able historians had not familiarised the public with a variety of startling anecdotes and narratives, which it was necessary to seek out with caution and labour in detached memoirs, often of doubtful authenticity.

A second Revolution has since enfranchised the march of public opinion, and imparted a new character to the throne of the Bourbons.

Much which, at the first appearance of this work, there was treason in uttering, is now established as the law of the fickle land of France. There are, consequently, peculiar inducements for its republication.

C. F. G.

London, 1841.

THE
SOLDIER OF LYONS;
OR,
THE TUILERIES.

CHAPTER I.

It is the cause — it is the cause, my soul!

Othello.

THE time-piece on the elegant toilet of the Marchioness de St. Florentin pointed to the hour of five, on the 22d of June, 1791, — the morning succeeding the eventful night selected by the unfortunate Louis XVI. for his flight from the Tuileries ;—and its owner had just resigned herself to the hands of her attendant, Mademoiselle Flavie, who was hastily removing the diamonds from her neck and the flowers from her hair, when a low tap at the door of the boudoir suspended her employment.

The marchioness trembled as she desired her attendant to see who waited without. Well might she tremble, — well might her faltering voice refuse to express the calmness she was desirous to assume ! On that momentous hour depended the uncertain issue of her future fate. It might prove her last of happiness ; nay, even of her earthly existence ! Her husband, — the husband of her free choice, in those days of general disregard to all but interested claims in the marriage vow, — the husband of her faithful

affection, at a period, and in a rank of society, where domestic virtues were rare,—was at that moment sharing the critical fortunes of his sovereign, and braving those perils of popular animosity, in the origination of which he was wholly innocent.

The Marquis de St. Florentin, holding no appointment in the royal household, and uninvolved in the odium of a record in the *Livre Rouge*, could not have been affected, even by a punctilious point of honour, by the dangers of the court, had not a powerful sentiment of personal affection for the House of Bourbon motived a voluntary sacrifice in the cause of his sovereign. He had never, it is true, been distinguished by the favour of Louis, while that favour retained its value in the eyes of his subjects. He had received no public distinctions, for he had courted none. The past commemorated no especial claim upon his gratitude; and the future,—alas! for his king and for his country!—afforded not the most remote allurement to the schemings of interest or ambition.

It was solely, therefore, under the influence of a chivalrous loyalty that St. Florentin resolved to assist in the escape of the royal family; leaving a beloved wife and two helpless children to the mercy of those, who might possibly render them victims to the success of his enterprise; and who would surely wreak upon himself, in case of the failure of his undertaking, the hatred and malice they so venomously cherished against every branch and adherent of the royal family of France.

“Would it not be more merciful,” whispered Madame de St. Florentin to her husband, when he tore himself from her arms on the morning of the preceding day,—“would it not be more generous to let me share your danger?—A dreadful presentiment overpowers my mind!” She faltered, and shudderingly averted her head from the shoulder of the marquis. “If we part this day, St. Florentin, it will be to meet no more. Danger and wickedness have come among us by imperceptible strides; unsuspecting of the ambuscade, unmindful of their advance, we have been surprised and disarmed.—Many, many will be the victims!—The first in rank, the first in loyalty, will pay the for-

feiture for their perilous distinction ; and if it must be so, if the shadow of fate has already fallen over our heads, let us dare the darkness together. Dearest St. Florentin ! take us with you !—your post, your danger shall be ours. — Do not let us part to-day !”

“ Silence, my dear Emiline,— forbearance, my poor trembling girl ! — If not for mine, for your own sake, dismiss these horrors from your thoughts. It is unworthy of you to enfeeble my mind on the eve of an important enterprise, by importunate appeals to my tenderness. A peremptory duty summons me from your side ; a duty equally peremptory requires *your* submission to the decree. Look at these innocent creatures !” he continued, leading her towards the bed where her little daughters lay clasped within each other’s arms,— “ look at them, and tell me whether you *dare* desert them.”

“ *You*, St. Florentin, feel no scruple in quitting them.”

“ I am a *man*. My duties are of a sterner and more uncompromising nature than your own. They lie in action, in unflinching energy,—yours, in patient acquiescence. We part but for a brief, brief trial. . All our measures are assured, our line of co-operation accurately determined. In less than three days, my precious trust will be honourably fulfilled ; and, in five, you will rejoin me on the Rhine, with these treasures of our common love. Yes ! in five short days, Emiline, we shall meet again, in the midst of security and peace. Heaven knows we have acquired a just estimation of their value !”

“ Oh, that our lesson were but happily ended ! The severest of my trials is yet to come : we are about to part for the first time, St. Florentin ; or it may be,—merciful Providence ! that I should say so !—it may be for the last !”

“ Is this your fortitude,— is this your promised heroism ? Remember that the slightest suspicion thrown at this crisis upon our movements might prove fatal to your sovereign, and to one whom you value,—shame that you are to the name of Navelles,—far, far beyond ;—*your husband*, Emiline, who fondly thanks you for the unheroic partiality. Beware, dearest, beware !—remember how many malevo-

lent eyes are fixed upon your conduct, and let your resolution ——”

“*My resolution!*” exclaimed Madame de St. Florentin, rising from her knees, on which she knelt beside the little couch of her children; “nay! you shall no longer doubt me,—no longer deride its energy. See, see what it can effect!” And she flung back her entangled hair from the pale face it overshadowed, and turned wildly towards him, with the assumed smile and affected submission of a maniac. “Are you satisfied, St. Florentin?—Am I sufficiently cheerful,—sufficiently self-possessed?”

He turned away, shocked and disconcerted; and implored her to refrain from such terrible demonstrations.

“Still discontented?” she exclaimed; “nay, then, take this last kiss and begone, for my heart is breaking.” And she pressed her cold lips to her husband’s forehead, and again implored him to leave her to her sorrow.

“One word more, dear Emiline!” said the marquis earnestly, taking her hand, and laying it with his own upon the heads of his sleeping children. “Promise me that, whatever may chance to yourself or me, these children shall still remain your first, your dearest object; that you will cherish those who love them, and cleave to those who can protect their helpless innocence?”

“Is this a necessary appeal,—has my conduct ——”

“Scorn it not, my beloved! Other claims may hereafter weigh heavily against their welfare;—the enthusiastic devotion of wedded love,—the unyielding pride of a loyal name,—and after these,—shrink not, my Emiline, at the word,—after these, the *memory of your husband!*—But when these, or other powerful interests, shall arise to mislead your heart, remember, that to the mother of two helpless girls self-preservation is a duty of primal moment. Remember this when the prejudices of your youth inflame your resistance to the spirit of the times. A Christian woman and a mother may blamelessly resign her worldly pride, in such a cause; and when I shall be no more ——”

St. Florentin could not complete his exhortation, for at that moment the *femme de chambre* of the marchioness burst into the room; adjusting the drapery of a mantle

which hung upon her arm, and gaily singing the *refrain* of a popular vaudeville—

*A la cour
Tout prend son tour,
Bibi,
A la façon de Barbini,
Mon ami !*

The Marquis de St. Florentin, who had long entertained suspicions of the fidelity of Mademoiselle Flavie, threw a hasty but significant glance towards his wife, which warned her to busy herself in adjusting the pillow of her daughters, in order to conceal the traces of agitation and despair visible upon her countenance. Then, turning towards the *soubrette*, he demanded, in a tone of jocularly very unfamiliar to his lips, the cause of her abrupt appearance.

“Mademoiselle Bertin had sent a basket of the most enchanting *chiffons* for Madame’s inspection ;—was she at leisure to look over the contents ?”

“Certainly, certainly,” replied the marquis, perceiving that his wife was totally incapable of framing a reply. “The moment is propitious,—since my presence, my excellent taste, and my munificence, may expedite the selection of madame la marquise. Let the damsel appear.”

An elegant little *grisette* accordingly glided into the chamber to deposit her important charge ; and gracefully throwing aside her shawl, proceeded to exhibit to the disregarding eyes of Madame de St. Florentin, various fanciful articles of fashionable millinery displayed upon her own far from unattractive person.

At length, affecting to approach the marchioness for the exhibition of her goods, she whispered, “Bid your maid quit the room.”

“Impossible !” replied the marchioness, in the same scarcely audible tone ; for she was not only conscious of Mademoiselle Flavie’s jealousy of temper, but had reason to believe that she had been successfully tampered with by the revolutionary faction ; who scrupled not to avail themselves of such instruments, in order to acquaint themselves as accurately as possible with the projected plans of the adherents of the court. Yet such was the temper of the

times, that she had not dared dismiss from her service a person who had the will and the power to become a dangerous enemy. The immediate connections and friends of Mademoiselle Flavie were forward in the ranks of the organised agitators of the public mind; and it would have been madness to attract their evil will at so desperate a crisis.

St. Florentin readily conjecturing that Mademoiselle Bertin,—zealously devoted to Marie Antoinette, and admitted, during the recent embarrassment of her affairs, somewhat too freely into the royal confidence,—had intrusted some important intelligence to the transmission of her *fille de magasin*,—a person not likely to fall under suspicion as the bearer of political communications,—affected to approach with an air of gallantry; inspecting her fragile stores and awkwardly adjusting them on his own person. With much adroitness she detected his intention, and began with arch coquetry to criticise and correct the errors of his choice; while Emiline turned despairingly away towards the children, sick of the scene of excellent dissembling she was required to play.

“*Mais fi! donc, monsieur le marquis,*” exclaimed the *modiste*, “you are trying to disgust madame with this beautiful mantle.” Then stooping to disentangle the flounce, she whispered, “At the barrier at ten o’clock.—Bayard.”—It was the password, and the appointment of the queen!—

The intelligent *soubrette* perceiving that her mission was accomplished, playfully resumed the jargon of her calling; while the marquis, affecting to grow indignant at his wife’s indecision of choice, allowed himself to be persuaded into the purchase of a velvet hat,—“*en souris gris,—couleur des plus distinguées!*”—which the Iris of the queen of fashion deposited in the care of Mademoiselle Flavie.

Then, turning towards the pale and heart-stricken Emiline, he kissed her hand, and in a tone of assumed levity, recommended his gift to her notice. Not daring to trust himself to a more explicit farewell, he bent one parting gaze upon the face of the wife he loved, and turning abruptly away, quitted her and his home,—perhaps for ever!—

But in that single parting look, he attempted to convey to his beloved Emiline his grateful sense of the fortitude with which she had succeeded in masking the struggle of her feelings. He observed with satisfaction a smile on her cheek, and a fixed serenity on her brow. Had he been a nearer or more dispassionate observer, he might have also seen that the blood oozed from between her compressed lips;—had he touched her hand with a less tremulous emotion, he would have perceived that it was cold and death-like as the marble upon which she was leaning. “I will not say farewell,”—were the last words of St. Florentin, as he gently closed the door.—How often, how painfully did they recur to the memory of his wife!—

CHAPTER II.

To beguile the time, look like the time.

Macbeth.

DURING that critical afternoon, the heroic fortitude of the Marchioness de St. Florentin had enabled her to continue her ordinary routine of arduous amusement, and busy idleness. She stepped into her carriage at the appointed hour; paid formal visits to persons unconnected with the objects which exclusively occupied her mind; and sedulously exhibited herself and her equipage at the door of a noted *magazin de nouveautés*. She neglected, in short, nothing which could counteract the suspicion that she was concerned in the movements of the court, or peculiarly interested in any event of the passing day.

At that epoch of terror and mistrust, when, as a member of the revolutionary tribunal has since recorded, “the system of domestic espionage was as troublesome as a perpetual swarm of insects; when every householder mistrusted his own servants, — when friends, children, and parents, renounced their mutual confidence*,” — when all

* *Vilate, Causes secrètes de la Révolution.*

the holiest bonds of society were giving way under the influence of revolutionary licence, the agitated wife, in her alarm for the object of her affection, ventured not to confide her feelings even to those most intimately connected with the royalist party.

One person alone was admitted to the painful distinction of partaking her anxieties. An old steward, attached throughout his prolonged life to the house of St. Florentin, and whose fortunes were bound up in its prosperity, was destined from the first to share the emigration of a family in whose happiness and welfare his own were thus deeply involved. He it was who had secretly effected every necessary preparation for their journey to the frontier; who had procured the passport, and provided the funds for their undertaking. The good old man, after ineffectually attempting to tranquillise, by his sanguine predictions of success, the agitation of his lovely mistress, — promised to devote a vigilant ear to the rumours of the day; and engaged that, should the slightest intimation transpire of the desperate enterprise in which St. Florentin was engaged, he would seek her at the Hôtel Nivernois; where, by pre-arrangement, she was to attend a ball likely to be prolonged to an early hour of the following morning. And thus, in the bitter struggle of her agony, she was obliged to assume the frivolous array and hollow semblance of mirth; and to veil in affected levity the anxieties, public and domestic, which assailed her mind!

The fête passed off with the usual affectation of gaiety, and splendour of appointment, distinguishing such entertainments. It was nearly the last of those gorgeous orgies by which the nobility of France attracted the fatal envy of a class which they still peremptorily excluded from their society. In England, a thousand honourable avenues conduct to public distinction, and to the social favour by which it is accompanied. Professional and literary success, — great talents, — great merit, — or great riches, — may elevate a man to the highest pinnacle of courtly or popular favour; and there is no one so humble, or so humiliated, but that his ambition may suggest a hope of admittance, or re-admittance, into the highest society of the realm. But

during the predominance of the *ancien régime* of France, rank alone,—ancient, hereditary rank,—was the pass-key into the Parisian saloons; and if occasionally a *fermier général*, or some other successful speculator or peculator, was admitted into their brilliant coteries, he was compelled to pay a severe penalty for the intrusion, in the endurance of a thousand insults; or by the sacrifice of other thousands, more tangible and less easily overlooked.

The Hôtel Nivernois was one of those which deigned to welcome within its lofty gates only those honoured guests, whose ancestors had been its accepted inmates from century to century. A Nivernois of the time of Henri Quatre, or François Premier, might have made his re-entrance upon its familiar stage, “clad in complete steel,” nor found among the revellers of the night a single *name* requiring the interpretation of heraldry. The laurels of the field or of the cabinet, had interposed no vile plebeian physiognomy betwixt the wind and his nobility; for the doubtful escutcheon of a *noblesse de robe*, or peerage won by eminence in the law,—was scornfully rejected by the chivalry of fashion; while the *noblesse d’épée*, or peerage won by martial distinction,—could rarely be conceded as the reward of heroic deeds, in an army where hereditary nobility was a requisite qualification for military advancement.

On the evening in question, the magnificent saloons of the Duchesse de Nivernois displayed at once their inherited friendships, and their inherited glories;—their antique tapestry, where the infancy of art betrayed itself,—like sickly human infancy,—in distortions and convulsions; and a still more ancient gallery of pictures,—which Perugino and Sasso Ferrato, Cranach and Durer, had laboured to fill with unpleasing representations of martyrdoms and other varieties of pious horror. There was the obsolete *marqueterie*,—the cabinets of Buhl or Florentine mosaic,—the stately Dresden vase, with its crisp garlands of life-like flowers;—the cup or shield of rich embossment, such as Cellini was wont to forge between the visions of his turbulent enthusiasm; and high over all, and irradiated by a lustrous glare of girandoles, a glowing and trophied representation of the heaven of mythology, glaring from the gorgeous

pencil of Le Brun. But what was the pride of Juno, compared with that of many a wide-hooped and pomponed duchess sailing beneath ;—what the prinness of Minerva, to that of many an illustrious *précieuse* of the circle ? Or how might the united pride and luxury of heathen supremacy, vie with that of the marshals, and *grand échantons* and *chevaliers de l'ordre* of the declining court of the unregenerated Bourbons ?—

Among its best and loveliest,—and it could still boast many who were good and beautiful,—none held a fairer reputation, or more general regard, than the Marquise St. Florentin ; but on that cruel night, amid the sights and sounds of levity which tortured her afflicted heart, her numerous admirers failed not to note the listless manner in which she bowed into silence their eloquent adulation. None of the playful brilliancy with which she was wont to retort upon their flatteries ; none of the piquant originality which commonly distinguished her address ! To escape their importunate inquisition, she rose to join in the dance ; and her pale abstraction, and unnatural wildness of eye, might have personified the heroine of Ford's terrific drama, — Calantha, — dancing on in horrible estrangement, till her heart breaks with the conflict of suppressed emotions !

Yet however indifferent the brilliant scene, she could not but observe a character of unusual softness and affectionate interest in the demeanour of her partner and near relative, the young Chevalier de Mirepoix. Vanity might have given a flattering interpretation to his altered manner ; but the marchioness, secure through the influence of a strong and hallowed attachment from every impulse of coquetry, dreamed of conquests as little as she desired them ; and attributed his attentions to their fitting origin,—his participation in the anxious secret that weighed upon her feelings.

The chevalier was a chief agent in the projected flight of the royal family ; and it was only in consequence of the suspicions which the incautious zeal of youth had fixed upon his person, and which might have attracted inquiry towards the disguised Louis and his companions, that he

had consented to remain in Paris till the royal fugitives should attain the Rhenish frontier.

"Be not alarmed," he whispered to Madame de St. Florentin, as he withdrew his fair cousin towards the embrasure of a window: "all will soon be well. Heaven watches over our cause; and though many among us have offended, and done our unwitting part to inflame and dis-temper the spirit of the people, you and yours are guiltless. Seldom and reluctantly sharing the festivities of the court, living in the decent retirement of a well-ordered home, your conscience is as free from blame as your person is secure from the odium which clings to several leading members of our party. *You* can have nothing to fear; and trust to my predictions, that within a few short days we shall be wandering with your husband,—grown unendurably vain of his exploit, and your little girls, who are vainer than all of us together,—among the vineyards of the Rhine."—

"Heaven realise the picture!" murmured Emiline, labouring to repress her rising tears.

"Hark!" interrupted the chevalier, leaning towards the half-open window, which overlooked the Boulevards. "Do you hear nothing?"

"Some accidental passenger whistling the *Romance du pauvre Jacques*."

"'Tis a concerted signal! A faithful servant undertook to give me this intimation, at an appointed minute, if all went smoothly with the *travellers*."

"Alas! that such precautions should have become needful," replied the marchioness; and scarcely able to retain her assumed composure, she prepared to quit the ball-room.

The Chevalier de Mirepoix hastened to seek her servants and equipage; but speedily returned with alarming intelligence that a riotous mob was assembled at the entrance of the court-yard; and that they had made a bonfire of the sedan-chairs in waiting, the tremendous flames of which rendered it impossible for the file of carriages to advance. The police, apprehensive of irritating the populace,—the power of which had already manifested itself

by many a horrible excess, or perhaps secretly inclined in favour of the revolutionary party, — took no measures to interrupt their course of outrage, or silence the offensive invectives and brutal epithets, which they lavished upon those trembling women who attempted to escape from a scene so appalling.

“Repress your alarm, and confide yourself entirely to my guidance, dearest cousin,” whispered Mirepoix; and attempting to conceal his own perturbation, he hastily drew aside Madame de St. Florentin, and enveloping her whole person in his mantle, proceeded to disguise her face in the ample folds of a large handkerchief.

In another minute she found herself carefully lifted through a window on the ground floor, and hurried, under the protection of Mirepoix’s arm, along a series of unfrequented streets leading towards her own dwelling. Many were the intoxicated groups of the rabble through which they were constrained to pass, who insisted, with the paramount right of might, upon their joining in the popular cry of “*A bas l’Autrichienne!*” “*A bas Monsieur et Madame Vêto.*”

They were soon at the gate of the Hôtel St. Florentin; where the astonished Swiss recognised, with distrustful wonder, the disguised person of the lady of his lord, returning home at such an hour, and so strangely attended.

CHAPTER III.

Your husband, — he is gone to *save* far off,
Whilst others come to make him *lose* at home. *Richard II.*

TERRIFIED, but thankful for her escape, the Marchioness de St. Florentin hastened to the solitude of her chamber. But it did not long remain solitary. Prudence required her to go through the usual formalities of her waiting-maid’s attendance, before she could allow herself the relief

of tears and self-gratulation. She had scarcely begun to disencumber herself from her ornaments, when, as has been already described, a low knock at the door of her chamber renewed her subsiding alarms.

"Who disturbs us, Flavie, at this unreasonable hour?" inquired she, with tremulous lips.

"It is *monsieur l'intendant*, who insists on an audience," answered her attendant, indignantly tossing her head as she returned from the door. "Truly, I think he might have intrusted his weighty mission to *my* hands. Had he studied the decencies to be observed in an honourable family, he would have known that the personal attendant of madame la marquise was a more creditable, if not so accredited an emissary of secret intelligence, as such a superannuated caves-dropping spy."

"Silence, Flavie! The age of Laporte should alone secure *your* respect, as it does that of your superiors. Admit him instantly."

"And the young officer of the National Guard by whom he is accompanied?"

"Of the National Guard? — Why did you not name him before? Whence comes he, Flavie, and what is his errand?" exclaimed Emiline, her husband's perilous absence instantly occurring to her mind.

"Madame la marquise assuredly takes me for a witch, or forgets that I have looked upon this young man, — who is so fortunate in his choice of a master of the ceremonies, — for the first time. But his errand," continued Mademoiselle Flavie, placing her hands in the embroidered pockets of her cambric apron with an air of defiance, "is probably addressed to madame, rather than to me. Shall I acquaint him that the Marquis de St. Florentin is absent, lest so unimportant a circumstance should chance to have escaped the worthy intendant's recollection?" — and she glanced maliciously towards Emiline's disordered dress and burning cheeks.

The voice of Laporte was now audible from without, imploring instant admittance; and his agitated mistress, hastily throwing a roquelaure over her shoulders, and taking a taper in her hand, rushed into the outer chamber.

"In the name of Heaven, Laporte! what means this disturbance?—Have you received any intelligence of——"

The old man interrupted her vehement apostrophe by a significant look at the waiting-woman.

"Leave the room, mademoiselle!" said Emiline, with an air of decision; and the *femme de chambre* obeyed the command with a glance of startled recognition at the military intruder.

"May I inquire for what purpose I am favoured with the visit of this gentleman?" resumed Emiline, gazing suspiciously on the young officer.

"Madame deigns not to honour me with her remembrance," observed the stranger, in a low tone. "Happily for herself, I cannot become equally forgetful."

"Camille, my good Camille!" shrieked Madame de St. Florentin, to whom the voice of the speaker was more familiar than his person disguised by military accoutrements; "tell me, why are you here at this late hour, — why at all, — and wherefore in this dress?" —

"My dress," said the soldier, looking down upon his sleeve, "is the badge of a corps which I trust I do not dishonour; and I am here, madam, — unbidden, as you remind me, — in order to rescue you and yours from approaching danger. This is no time for idle explanations, — for the deliberations of delicacy. I speak plainly, or I speak too late. Ere this, the fugitive king has been arrested; ere morning, you will be yourself conducted to prison, as an accessory in the conspiracy, unless you embrace an instant opportunity of flight."

Madame de St. Florentin clasped her hands in agony. "My husband then is lost!" she exclaimed, looking eagerly towards the soldier.

"He has shared the fate of his sovereign, and is by this time a prisoner. But I beseech you, madam, let not the poignancy of your grief overcome all sense of duty towards yourself, and towards your children. The indecision of a single hour may throw you into the hands of your enemies. Providence can alone foresee in what excess of persecution the victors in such a cause may indulge!"

"Monsieur Camille!" interrupted the indignant steward,

“ does it become you to intimidate madame by your menaces, or school her into compliance by your self-assumed authority ? ”

“ May Heaven, my good Laporte,” observed the marchioness, “ provide me with no harsher preceptor. Oh ! Camille,” said she, bursting into tears, and turning towards the soldier, whose commanding figure and stern countenance relaxed at the sound of her voice, “ how different are these days of sorrow and confusion, from those when in our childhood we tended the hives together in your mother’s garden. — Would — would that I were now sheltered with my children beneath her roof ! ”

“ The very spot, madam, which I had selected as your place of refuge,” replied Camille, with respectful deference. “ Say but one word, — one gracious word, — and before this hour to-morrow, you shall be safe in the humble abode you deign to remember with regret.”

“ Indeed ? ” replied Emilie ; some bitter consciousness of humiliation mingling with her looks and words. “ And may I inquire through what new distinctions, what mighty influence, you are enabled to offer your protection to the wife of St. Florentin ? — It is somewhat new in our national annals, and sufficiently speaks the altered character of the land, that the poorest vassal of an ancient line of nobility is empowered to vouchsafe his safeguard to the daughter of his hereditary lord.” She blushed for the ungenerous words which the bitterness of degradation wrung from her lips. But Camille replied to the taunt with unmoved calmness.

“ It is, I trust, madam, neither new nor wonderful, that a son of France should be moved by gratitude to respect the companion of his childhood, though fallen into adversity, — fallen through what mischance or what *error*, it were ungracious to inquire.”

“ Silence, young man ! ” exclaimed the aged steward, astounded at the audacity of Valazy.

“ Lady,” resumed Camille, in a still firmer and more energetic tone, “ the passing moment, which we waste so idly, is one of the mightiest importance ; — if we lose it, the chance is irrecallable. My forefathers were retainers of your own. — I was born a vassal of your house — My

mother alienated my infancy from her bosom, to place *you* there ; and when I became fatherless, it was the fondness of her nursling which rescued us from ruin and misery."

"Camille ! is this a time ——"

"Hear me to an end, and then, madam, resume, if you will, your disdainful reproaches. I was deprived by a trifling fault of boyhood, of your noble father's protection. But I bless the day in which I was expelled from the lands of the Duc de Navelles, since, by laying the foundation of my fortunes, it has enabled me to secure the safety of his daughter and her infant children. Scorn it, madam, if you will ; but after-hours will prove that many royalists, your equals in honour and station, would gladly have availed themselves this night of similar assistance."

"I am to understand, then," said the marchioness, with an air of *hauteur*, "that I have the honour of conversing with a faithless factionary of the revolutionists?"

"It matters little by what epithet, madam, you choose to qualify your scorn," replied Valazy, gazing mournfully on the unwonted expression of waywardness disfiguring her lovely countenance. "Suffice it that you converse with one bound to your service by ties before which party, interest, even duty itself, are frail as the smoking flax. Little would it avail me to recount the feelings, the hopes, which have rendered me what I am. Let me, therefore, only boast myself your humblest of servants, and as such win confidence to my assurances."

"I beseech you, madame la marquise, pardon his presumption," said Laporte, earnestly. "In spite of his jargon and unreasonable pretensions, Camille Valazy is still your devoted adherent."

"I must be permitted to withhold my trust, Laporte, till Monsieur Valazy condescends to explain himself."

"*Monsieur* Valazy," resumed the young soldier, reddening, "knows, with very painful certainty, that a deputation of the National Assembly, which met on the first rumour of his majesty's departure, will visit this house at daybreak, to affix the national seal upon the papers and effects of the Marquis de St. Florentin ; and that a warrant

of arrest is already issued against your person, as having abetted his criminal practices against the state."

"The state!" exclaimed Emilie. — "The state, which itself conspires against the safety of its anointed sovereign! — My husband's *practices*! — would that the mercy of Heaven had crowned them with success; for they are honourable as his own noble nature!"

"You have children, madam," observed Valazy, somewhat sternly; and the rising glow of her enthusiasm instantly faded from the beaming countenance of the marchioness.

"Your projects, Camille — your preparations! — speak, — speak! — explain them without hesitation!"

"I have obtained a passport," answered Valazy, drawing a paper from his bosom, "which will enable you to pass with your children, under the protection of the faithful Laporte, as far as Montreuil sur Mer. I have a friend there, high in authority, who will see you placed in security under my mother's roof; towards whom, madam, I rejoice to perceive your affection still unchanged. From thence, and seizing the earliest opportunity, you will do well to seek your eventual safety in England."

"In England?" faltered the astonished Laporte.

"*In emigration?*" murmured the marchioness; "and leave my husband in the hands of assassins? — Never!"

"Hush!" said Camille, pointing towards the door, "For *his* sake, learn to moderate your expressions; and for your own, deign, madam, to remember that should his life be endangered your utmost efforts in his cause would be utterly ineffectual, while your presence might place a fatal impediment upon his movements."

"It may be so, — it may indeed be so," replied Emilie, wringing her hands; "but would even a certainty of the fact warrant my desertion, — my base and cruel desertion? — No! I will at least soothe his affliction by participating in his danger."

"To an attached husband," observed Camille, with bitterness, "such a resolution must afford a singular source of consolation!" Then starting, as the sound of some distant movement struck his ear, he approached with

precipitate earnestness, and renewed his entreaties. "I beseech, I implore you, madam, dally not thus with instant danger. — Within an hour, you will be a prisoner, if you persist in your rash obduracy. — A post-carriage at this very moment waits your orders in the adjoining street; Laporte will aid me in conveying you thither, with your children; and for *their* sakes, — for their innocent sakes, — peril no further delay. — Confide in the playmate of your infancy," he continued, throwing himself at her feet, — "confide in the devoted servant of your father's house, — confide —"

"Rise, sir!" interrupted Emiline; "the wife of St. Florentin has courage to meet the dangers of her destiny. Let them come! — I shall be found at my post, — and willing to share the fortunes of my husband."

Again Valazy persisted, pleaded, — nay, almost threatened; — and again, Emiline, with warmer energy, repelled his prayer. Wounded pride, or perhaps some feminine instinct which taught her to mistrust his motives, confirmed her resolution.

"Is it indeed so?" said Camille Valazy, mournfully, when at length he rose from his knees. "Must a being so good, so gifted, become the victim of a prejudice, — the dupe of an empty sound? — Old man!" he continued, suddenly seizing Laporte by the arm, and impelling him towards his mistress, "join in my prayers, — second, my entreaties, — aid me to save her against her very will! — Oh, God! — oh, merciful God! grant us the powers of persuasion! — Her life hangs upon the chances of this hour."

"Take my thanks, young sir," said the marchioness, extending her hand towards him. "My resolution is fixed."

"All — all is vain!" murmured Camille, proudly declining a pledge so coldly offered. "I leave you, lady; — I obey your commands, and feel, — how bitterly feel, — your contempt. But no matter. To loiter here were to risk my own safety, through which alone, *yours* may be hereafter secured. I leave you; but if your heart retain one generous emotion, you will repent the needless pain you have inflicted upon mine. I shall live to be avenged!" So saying, and with a hasty step, he left the chamber.

But in quitting the Hôtel St. Florentin, a new solution of Emiline's wilfulness suggested itself to his distrustful mind,— the carriage of the Chevalier de Mirepoix crossed him as he passed the *porte cochère*.

CHAPTER IV.

Oh, sir! you are too bold and peremptory;
And majesty might never yet endure
The moody frontier of a servant brow
You have good leave to leave us.

Henry IV. 1st Part.

CAMILLE VALAZY, as the reader may have collected from the foregoing conversation, was son to the foster-mother of Madame de St. Florentin. Deprived in infancy of his father, he was adopted by an uncle, Pierre Valazy, who officiated as land-steward to the Duc de Navelles, and rented a small farm in the vicinity of the château; while his mother was retained in the service of his noble foster-sister, to share whose infant pastimes, Camille was frequently and familiarly admitted. Thus honoured by the favour of his lord, and cherished by his surviving connections, the spirited boy would have grown up contented with his destinies, but for the mortifications and malicious provocations of his uncle's son, a lad several years his senior. Maximilien, regarding him as an interloper in his father's house, and jealous of the distinctions which his mother's interest with her lady-nursling failed not to procure for him at the castle, profited by every occasion of insult and oppression to harass his young cousin, and display his own perverse frame of mind. Nature appeared indeed to have gifted him with every fair and noble attribute, save the one which is fairest and noblest. He was beautiful in person, intelligent in mind, brave and hardy in temperament; but he had a perverse and malignant heart, full of scorn and envy of the upright character of his poorer kinsman.

Notwithstanding his ingratiating qualities,—notwithstanding the open forehead, clustered with glossy curls, and that mellowness of voice which is the eloquence of sound,—notwithstanding his acute wit and resolute courage,—there was not a parent throughout the country who coveted him as a son, nor a mother who desired him as the husband of her daughter. Insolently overbearing wherever his strength and daring could second his presumption, Maximilien was abject and servile where his purposes required the aid of craft ; and recoiled not from any sacrifice or degradation, which could further his interests, or the deep-laid schemes of his ambition. Accustomed to regard the house of Navelles as his only source of family aggrandisement, he exhibited all the zeal and devotion befitting a faithful adherent ; but as he advanced in years, and the impulses of talent began to suggest a stronger consciousness of self-reliance, the submissiveness of his obedience gradually relaxed ; and he now calculated the possibilities of lifting his head above those waves, through which he had hitherto dreamed only of a safe and unnoticed passage.

Unfortunately for a mind thus constituted, Maximilien Valazy had “fallen upon gloomy days” in the destiny of his native country. His dawning reason fixed his contemplations on the causes and relations of things, at a period when the corruption of a feeble and vicious king* began to introduce fatal disorders into the state, and to disorganise the general frame of society. The Encyclopedists were beginning to disseminate the doctrines of infidelity and insubordination in every class of society ; and young Valazy, infatuated by their brilliant eloquence, had enthusiastically enlisted under their banners, long before the developement of his powers enabled him to estimate the importance of the cause in which those banners were unfurled.

Glorying in the philosophical dogma which seemed to dignify his lawless insolence of mind, Maximilien realised his first vision of equality among the sons of men, by qualifying the Duc de Navelles, his father’s ancient patron, as a *fou frotté*, in the hearing of all the elders of the village !

* Louis XV.

It happened that the duke, — as tenacious of his privileges of rural sport, as others of his degree in other countries, — exacted with absurd rigour the maintenance of the ancient forest laws throughout his domains ; while young Valazy, under the influence of his newly-acquired opinions, not only presumed on their bold infringement, but pursued his unlawful chase even into the presence of his hereditary lord !

The Duc de Navelles remonstrated with the daring trespasser upon his rights, in those strong terms with which an old man generally allows himself to convey his displeasure to a young one, even when holding an equal station in life. Maximilien, however, who heard in the well-merited reproof only the imperious mandate of an oppressor, retorted with such bold audacity, that the Duc de Navelles, who was on horseback, was provoked to strike him with the end of his whip. Valazy immediately sprang upon him like an infuriated tiger ; and tearing him from his horse, was about to see “ what blood the old man had in him,” when his attendants coming up, made the young ruffian prisoner ; and two days afterwards a *lettre de cachet* transferred him to the dungeons of the fortress of Bitche.

The elder Valazy, a devoted adherent to his *seigneur*, saw in his son's disgrace only the fitting fruit of his misdoings. “ He has dishonoured a loyal name,” said the old man emphatically ; “ and as to the punishment of his offence, be it as our good master pleases.”

But there was one inmate of the farm of Grand Moulin, who did not so patiently resign himself to the arbitrary decree. Canille, who, though his nature differed entirely from the violent and assuming character of his cousin, was sufficiently imbued with the opinions of the liberal party to resist with ardour and firmness the slightest show of oppression, — was painfully affected by the stigma which seemed to have affixed itself upon his family.

“ We, too, had our ancient pedigree !” said he ; “ a pedigree of four hundred years' unsullied yeomanship from sire to son ; during which, no shadow of disrepute dishonoured our name. But now, a Valazy has received the withering weight of a blow, and must not wash away the

stain with blood ; a Valazy, — a free man, — an independent citizen, — is shut out by a tyrannous hand from the fair light of nature ; and must not plead, in the ears of men, against the will of his oppressor." The impetuous youth, though he still smarted under the malevolent sarcasms of his kinsman, could not but regard with warm indignation the infringement upon the rights of man in the person of Maximilien.

In the excitement of the moment, he ventured even to seek an audience of remonstrance with the Duc de Navelles, who reproved his temerity with the loftiest scorn ; and the youth thus casually roused to a spirit of peevish disputation of the divine right and feudal privileges of the aristocracy, gradually forsook his blameless routine of useful employment, to listen to the secret and deepening murmurs of the discontented of his own degree.

His old uncle, terrified by the delusions which appeared to extend their contagion through his household, vainly endeavoured to recall him to the duty of passive obedience ; and Camille might perhaps have been tempted into some overt act of defiance to the powers that were upon the lands and estates of Navelles, had not his mother, in attendance on her beloved and loving charge, arrived opportunely at the château. From that moment, "a change came o'er the spirit of his dream."

Emiline de Navelles had at this time expanded from the artless playmate of his infancy, into a beautiful, graceful, and captivating woman. The charm of her character and address was universally felt and acknowledged, even by those who detected not the qualities from which it derived its peculiar fascination. Tenderness of heart was the prevailing grace which softened her demeanour, and actuated every impulse of her character.

And now this perilous and overflowing softness of feeling was beginning to assume the firmer texture of womanly affection ; Emiline being on the point of marriage with the chosen of her heart, — the young Marquis de St. Florentin, her father's favourite nephew.

It was several years since she had visited Navelles, or Camille been admitted to her presence ; but Madelon's

interest with the *gouvernante* of the young heiress easily procured him an occasion to throw himself at her feet, in order to solicit her interposition in favour of his unhappy cousin.

"Rise, my good brother!" said the gentle girl, with encouraging softness; "if your wish be possible, it is already granted;" and running with privileged freedom into the cabinet of the duke, her endearments readily procured an order for Maximilien's liberation.

"I have promised one concession on your own part, Camille," observed Mademoiselle de Navelles, as she delivered the welcome document into his hands. "My father is of opinion that a more active mode of life would afford a profitable school both to yourself and to your cousin. He exacts, in short, that you should leave this neighbourhood for a season."

Camille Valazy, to whom, on many accounts, this sentence of temporary banishment from Grand Moulin afforded a welcome release, bowed his humble acquiescence; and being aware that his cousin had long determined upon leaving home, in order to enter himself as a student in one of the Parisian colleges, resolved to accept an offer which he had recently received — and half rejected — from a distant relative of his mother, to become an assistant in one of the most flourishing factories at Lyons, of which his kinsman was the resident director. Madelon, anxious that he should obey the orders of his incensed patron, warmly urged his departure; nor did he long resist her recommendations.

"My destiny assigns me a less ambitious career than my inclinations," said he at parting. "But if it enable me, mother, to acquire a decent competence, and render your old age happy and independent, I am contented."

"And what has thy father's son to do with ambition?" —replied Madelon, gravely. "Thy uncle has turned the head of Maximilien, by sending him yonder to the city to cumber his head with learning that unfits him for a life of labour. Thyself, Camille, has caught the parrot-phrase of his presumption, and with less excuse; for thou hast nothing to support thy pride,—not even the knowledge

which is the serpent-tempter of thy cousin Max. Forget it, my son, forget it ;—and in its stead, learn that thine old mother derives her chief happiness from her *dependence* on her kind protectors.”

Young Valazy blushed for his mother, — then for himself ; and repeating that Navelles had long been insupportable to him, joyfully departed to embrace his new vocation. He was scarcely aware that the feelings which he carried with him, were so powerfully developed as to have already decided the character of his future destinies.

CHAPTER V.

And grave he grew, and inwardly intent,
And far back in his mind with sudden spring,
Look, gesture, smile, speech, silence, every thing ;
Turning then shapely sweetness every way,
Till 'twas his food and habit, day by day,
And she became companion of his thought. LEIGH HUNT

THE interview between Camille and Mademoiselle de Navelles had imprinted a new character upon the mind and feelings of the young enthusiast. Alienated from the gentler ties of domestic life, reared wholly among men and far from his surviving parent, Valazy had acquired from his solitary haunts and occupations a contemplative and romantic frame of mind. To escape from companionship with his ungenial cousin, he had selected in boyhood the task of superintending his uncle's extensive flocks upon the hills. Next, he became the woodsman of the farm ; and in the course of either employment, had leisure to indulge in that visionary exaltation of soul, so apt to generate unquiet dispositions. The world of which Camille dreamed in his solitude, was one of his own imagining ; and its visions were fatal to the subordinate course of his destinies.

As he grew in years, the literary stores which his cousin

brought back from his brief course of city education, became open to his inquiry ; and the books which Maximilien procured from Lyons, of a sceptical and democratic character, became his constant companions. Without pilot, without compass, he launched himself upon that mighty ocean, whose waves have impelled so many an unwary voyager to his destruction ; and which, though they lave the shores of thousands of rich and prosperous countries, have many a desert island threatening shipwreck. But Camille thought not of the whirlpool, the iceberg, or the volcano. He dreamed but of the flowery regions gemming the bosom of that great deep of mind on which he sailed deliciously along ;—enchanted with the varying tints of shore and sky, and wooing the impulsive winds and unseen currents forwarding his progress.

A person of so sensitive and delicate a cast, would scarcely yield the rich prize of his affections to one of the uneducated peasants of his native village ; above whom, indeed, the Valazy family maintained an unsociable supremacy. In the depths of his solitude, his mind had figured forth an idol,—lovely, pure, gentle, and intelligent,—on which he delighted to lavish his homage ; and this fair creature of his brain,—“this eldest virgin daughter of the skies,”—he had found realised in the sister of his childhood,—the beautiful Emiline. Her image was mingled with his earliest reminiscences of tenderness and joy. He had ever cherished the recollection of a fairy thing, whose playful steps had danced with his own,—whose soft arms had twined round his little neck,—whose toys, and treasures, and sweetest kisses had been lavished upon “her own dear Madelon’s own dear Camille.” But the tide of passionate feeling which now rushed upon his heart rose from a different source. He still loved Emiline, but he did not affect to misinterpret the nature of his love. His very despair appeared to augment its fervour.

Even in the dull routine of occupation exacted by his new employment at Lyons, Camille found leisure for the day dreams of his affection. For the first time in his life, imprisoned within the walls of a city, he soon thirsted for the balmy morning air and greenwood depths of his native

forests. His mind was ever wandering in the valleys of Navelles ; — hanging like their native lilies over those wandering streams, and picturing the fair form glancing like that of a wood-nymph among the thickets of the vast domain. Nor did he attempt to drive the image from his mind : —

'Twas but his taste for what was natural, —
And still his fav'rite thought was loveliest of them all.

When at length there arrived a letter from his mother, describing, in her usual terms of partial affection, the celebration of the happy marriage of her foster-child, — the festivities of the bridal day, the graceful loveliness of the young wife, and the considerate kindness of the Marquis de St. Florentin towards herself, Camille received the intelligence with only a transitory feeling of bitterness. The bride was not removed by a single degree the further from his humble adoration. Emiline de Navelles had been a “bright particular star” shining in the heaven of his fancy ; and Emiline de St. Florentin could be nor more nor less. “Since this marriage insures her happiness,” thought Camille, “let me rejoice in its completion. — She cannot form a wish of which I do not pray to Heaven for the fulfilment.”

Meanwhile, Maximilien, released from his ignominious durance, returned to Navelles to prepare for the course of life assigned by his sentence of banishment ; and which no other circumstances would have induced his old father to sanction. Pierre Valazy entertained an opinion, that agricultural cares and labours offer the most honourable occupation to those who boast no gentle blood as a plea for idleness ; but he considered a life of study preferable to one of mere pleasure ; and as his garners were filled with plenteousness through his prolonged and laborious activity, he readily supplied his son with the means of entering himself in the Collège de Louis le Grand. The young aspirant scarcely repined at the means through which a measure so consonant with his desires had been brought about.

He was, in fact, prepared to take his departure from

Grand Moulin, in the quietest and most inoffensive manner; but the Duc de Navelles, with injudicious pertinacity, insisted on bestowing a parting admonition on the refractory offspring of his submissive steward. The impatient young man would even have endured without remonstrance the prosy dulness of his suzerain's common-place harangue; but the Duc de Navelles had unfortunately judged it expedient to summon his whole household as witnesses of an audience so fraught with edification, as well as to mingle with his reproof certain bitter taunts, which roused the worst feelings of young Valazy's passionate nature. Too deeply irritated to hear his insulting lesson to an end, Maximilien rushed from the chamber. But as he reached the door, he turned his flashing and dilated eyes upon the astonished auditory; and extending one hand towards the aged duke, in an attitude of denunciation, "*Vous m'avez avili!*" he cried. "You have trampled me beneath your feet. Fortune may yet place me where you sit—and leave you where I stand:—nay! lower by ten thousand-fold!—I wait her sentence.—Aristocrat, we shall meet again!"

There was a deep silence as the sound of his departing footsteps was heard echoing along the corridor; and the domestics of the duke, instead of resenting the insolence of Valazy, or intercepting his passage, fetched a general breath, as if relieved from the presence of some supernatural being. Even young St. Florentin remained breathless with surprise; and was glad to escape to the society of his wife for further explanations.

"Your father, Emiline," said he, "has made this day an implacable and dangerous enemy."

"Dangerous? It is to be hoped the Duc de Navelles may laugh to scorn the menaces of one so degraded as Max Valazy."

"No enemy can be considered despicable who is animated by an enterprising mind; more especially if, as in the present instance, unrestrained by moral or religious principle. It is by a combination of spirits such as that of young Valazy, that factions arise fatal to the repose of nations; and in the strife of the conflict, when individual is opposed to individual, the finest attemperment of the

most polished weapon is no surety against the rude pike of a determined assailant. Mark my prediction, Emiline, that in the event of any popular tumult, Maximilien Valazy will become a conspicuous leader. He unites an audacious courage with the depth of sagacity requisite to attain such an eminence."

"But why dream of popular tumults?—This is not the first time I have heard you refer to such a bugbear."

"Nor will it be the last. The dissensions continually arising between the king, his ministers, and his parliament,—the growing unpopularity of her majesty,—the deep-laid schemes of the Palais Royal——"

"Unpopular?—the queen unpopular? Dear St. Florentin, think for an instant of the last opera at which we were present, and the applause that followed the chorus,—

'Chantons, célébrons notre Reine!'"

"Remember rather the fickleness and exaggeration of our national character. Children of impulse,—of enthusiasm,—the sight of a lovely woman brilliantly attired, suffices to obliterate for the moment all recollection of the undue influence attributed to Marie Antoinette. While Dugazon and Jélyot are pouring forth their thrilling harmonies, the imaginary millions transferred by her intervention to the Austrian treasury became of minor importance. But the relaxed bow is easily strung anew; and there will come an interval of calmer disaffection, when the busy spirits which have long been secretly undermining our ancient constitution will gather together like electric clouds."

"Silence, thou worse than Cassandra!" exclaimed Emiline, placing her hand reproachfully upon his lips. "The momentary troubles excited between the court and the city have altogether ceased, except in the minds of a few alarmists like thyself. *'Après la pluie, le beau temps!'*"

While the nobility of France were thus wilfully blinding themselves to the gathering darkness which gradually obscured the political atmosphere, numerous classes of the discontented were beginning to organise their scattered numbers into a common body:—like the wandering veins of a mine, extended through darkness, but united by an

unchanging centre. Among his fellow-students of the capital, Maximilien Valazy could not fail to encounter these widely-spreading channels ; and the kindred spirits with which he surrounded himself gradually confirmed his wavering principles into the extremity of democratic virulence.

Of these companions many have since attained unhappy distinction. The romantic Camille Desmoulins,—the witty and licentious Louvet, — and others of their caste, have been “ damned to everlasting fame,” as the earliest planters of that tree of liberty, which, like the upas, dropped poison upon the heads to which it proffered shelter. He became member of the Breton club ; a popular orator at the seditious meetings of the day ; an anonymous contributor to the periodicals established by his companions. * He was enlisted, in short, in the foremost ranks of the cabal which grew and grew, till the earth was filled with the shadow thereof.

It was not solely the influence of a perverted patriotism or an ill-understood devotion to the cause of independence, which united Maximilien Valazy to the popular cause. He was anchored there by a barbed and venomous instrument — by the power of *Hatred*, — deep, dark, and concentrated as the infernal gulf ! — His father having died during the first year of his banishment from Grand Moulin, the Duc de Navelles, extending his allodial privileges to their utmost limit, compelled the heir to dispose of his leasehold rights, and expelled him from his territories. In addition, therefore, to the clinging remembrance of a blow, Maximilien cherished a recent consciousness of indignity and oppression, which rendered the very name of Navelles a rallying cry to the tumultuous passions of his soul. The lust of vengeance fevered his every pulse ; and whenever his pathway was crossed by the equipage of the Marquise de St. Florentin, and all other eyes were riveted upon the brilliancy of her innocent beauty, Valazy would again and again mutter fiercely betwixt his grinding teeth, — “ Aristocrat, we shall meet again ! ”

How little, — amid her career of success and prosperity, the adoration of her father and her husband, the wakening

smiles of her children, the applause of troops of friends, and the "golden opinions of all sorts of men," — how little did Emiline imagine herself to be an object of intense passion, — of love and loathing, — to two individuals lost in that wide crowd, on which she gazed impassively as on a painted sea! — Blinded by early prejudice, she would have still regarded those obscure individuals as clods of her native valley: congenial with the earth they were born to dig for their daily bread. She knew not that the hour was approaching when a Promethean torch would animate such moulds of clay into a frightful intensity of being; and that her own destinies, and those still dearer to her, would hang upon the uncontrolled will of men, whom she had seen crouching on their bended knees in the presence of her noble parent, —

Begging their brother of the dust
To give them leave to toil!

CHAPTER VI.

Quoi Lisette! est-ce vous?
Vous, en riche toilette —
Vous, avez des bijoux —
Vous avez une aigrette?
Vos pieds dans le satin
N'osent fouler l'herbette; —
Des fleurs de votre teint
Où faites vous emplette?

BERANGER.

MEANWHILE the younger Valazy, destined to an humbler sphere of action, and a mode of life the useful activity of which forbade the continuance of his speculative studies, became less and less interested in the disputes and discontents of the new system of philosophy. It was his fortune, and a happy one, to live among a race of men devoted to the interests of their calling; who, while they saw their workmen thriving and peaceable, and their looms in full occupation, were indifferent whether pope or emperor ruled the hour. They were, in short, uninfected by the

prevailing and still prevalent mania for ruling and regulating a state, already perplexed with over-legislation ; and as Camille, on his arrival at Lyons, found neither partisans nor even listeners for his patriotic declamations, and as he was now secure from the daily spectacle of aristocratic encroachment, he became less morbidly tenacious of popular rights ; and devoted the exercise of his excellent understanding to the improvement and furtherance of the branch of trade to which circumstances had attached his services.

In these views, his early proficiency in mathematical studies, — the sole profitable instruction he had gathered from the aid of his talented cousin, — seconded his ardour ; and during his second year of attendance at the manufactory, he effected a mechanical improvement which induced the partners of the establishment to grant him a share in the concern, as their easiest mode of repayment ; — they wished to make him their own at any price. The gentle demeanour and fine person of young Valazy, had also their part in securing his popularity, not only throughout the populous establishment to the well-being of which his cares were directed, but among the more respectable inhabitants of the commune. He might even have realised the destiny which romance commonly assigns to the industrious apprentice, by marrying his master's daughter ; the heiress of his elder partner having made some singular demonstrations of preference in his favour. But Camille appeared wedded to his commercial drudgery. He remained unobservant of the coquetry of the young Lyonnaise ; and retained his grave and reserved address throughout the civic duties and social intercourse, to which he was introduced by the wide connections and growing opulence of the firm. He was sad without discontent ; but his melancholy, like that of Jacques, was one peculiarly his own.

The only cheerful smiles in which he was seen to indulge, arose on the occasional receipt of a letter from his mother ; which, in spite of its rude orthography, and the ruder simplicity of its style, found a direct road to his heart. Whatever errors of composition the epistles of Madelon might exhibit, her sentiments were never ignoble ; never

dishonouring either to herself or her son. Her tenderness for Camille, her partiality for her nursling, formed the themes of her correspondence; and even her gratitude towards the Duc de Navelles, who, on the death of Pierre Valazy, and the marriage of her lovely charge, had established her in all comfort and honour upon the farm of Grand Moulin, was free from any taint of servility. She felt her claims on his generosity; and rejoiced that the prosperity and filial duty of her son enabled her to receive the partial munificence of the Navelles' family without drawback from a degrading sense of necessity.

And then she dwelt with such fond fervour on the graceful virtues of the child she had reared at her bosom, — of her own Emiline, — of *his!* — who grew, she said, in favour with God and man, and had now given the world a copy, — and, according to Madelon, a very resembling one, — of her excellence. Once or twice she adverted to the strong anxieties entertained by the family of Navelles, its friends and adherents, relative to the adjustment of the popular differences, and the security of the court of Versailles. But when with these words, — for they had become *mere words* to Camille Valazy, — Madelon proceeded to connect the name of St. Florentin and the interests of little Emiline and her mother, he failed not to regard with the seriousness due to its importance, a subject which his secluded position and engrossing employments had in a great measure withdrawn from his consideration.

A secret dread of crossing the brilliant path of Madame de St. Florentin had hitherto determined Camille to decline the pressing desire of his partners, that he should undertake the annual settlement of their affairs with their Parisian correspondents. He knew that Emiline, though unhonoured by an appointment in the royal household, was regarded as one of the most brilliant ornaments of the court; where her simplicity of manners, the purity of her conduct, and the perfect harmony subsisting throughout her domestic relations, were enhanced by many an unfortunate contrast. A more intimate knowledge of the frame of Parisian society would have taught him that stars so differing in glory as the beauty of the Faubourg St. Germain, — the

favourite of the Trianon,—and an unobtrusive merchant of Lyons in his entresol of the Rue de la Jussienne, were fixed in their allotted courses,—parallel, and incapable of junction.

But various circumstances now concurred to change his disinclination for a visit to the metropolis. Madelon's recent communications were of a character sufficiently alarming to direct his eager attention towards the position of public affairs, and the destinies of those who were so intimately involved in the distresses of the court; and from the same quarter, he had received hints concerning the conduct, character, and views of his cousin, which struck him with dismay and regret. He was aware by what wanton excesses Maximilien contrived to distinguish himself, even in the most licentious capital of Europe; and by Maximilien's bold avowal of his vices, knew also that the patrimony of the respectable Pierre had been gradually melting away under the fiery clutch of sin; while his own generosity was frequently taxed to uphold the falling fabric.

But he now resolved to see and judge the offender and his offences, that he might remonstrate, or assist, as the case might require; and while mingling in the murmuring crowd of the great Babylon, hoped to gather tidings from its hubbub of the existing order of things, and hints of their probable event. He prepared himself to feel much disapprobation, to endure many disgusts, in that resplendent world which had never yet shone upon his rustic eyes; and which books and his own fancies had exaggerated to his conceptions, as books and fancies *will* exaggerate.

But even prepared as he was, the *coup d'œil* afforded by Maximilien Valazy's suite of apartments, struck him as some unreal and fantastic vision. He had been told that his cousin entertained a guilty connection with a young peasant of his native village; whose parents had been deceived into a belief that she was engaged in honourable service at Paris; while in reality she was degraded to the condition of Maximilien's mistress, and initiated into his arts of daring profligacy. Since the period of his cousin's imprisonment, Camille had become a stranger to them both;

and his recollections of little Flavie portrayed her figure clad in the short scarlet petticoat and sabots of her provincial costume ; with her good-humoured countenance smiling archly beneath its coarse cornette of white linen. In such a dress, he had last seen her when, in driving home her father's cows from the pasture with a beechen bough, she usually paused for a moment's gossip at the gate of Grand Moulin ; where Maximilien, in his short jacket of grey camlet, was leaning upon the very gun which had been his passport to the ill opinion of the Duc de Navelles. The whole scene rose before his eyes, — with its evening wood, its blossomed hawthorns, its home-bound shepherds whistling towards the farm ; and the freshness and simplicity of such a picture served to heighten the glare by which he was dazzled, as he entered the apartments of his cousin, and surveyed the luxurious extravagance of their decorations.

The rich texture of the carpets, — a luxury at that time unknown in the provinces, — the commodes of carved orange-wood, — the girandoles of massive crystal and candelabra of glittering steel ; curtains with draperies of filmy muslin and cachemire, — tables of Sèvres porcelain, breathing bird-like melodies from their invisible mechanism, — these and all the costly adornments of the gorgeous chamber, appeared worthy of the boudoir of a fairy princess, rather than of the retirement of a plebeian patriot, affecting to sigh after the purity of republican austerity.

But if the extrinsic embellishments of his cousin's dwelling excited his attention, his surprise was great indeed when the divinity of the shrine became visible ; Mademoiselle Flavie herself, — affecting the extreme of Parisian fashion, — gaudy and overdressed, — glaring with rouge, and prominently exhibiting the foot which had discarded its ebony sabot, enveloped in a stocking of brocaded gauze, and a brodequin of the most delicate silk ! — She interrupted the pause of displeasure which had succeeded Camille's astonished start, by a forced and immoderate peal of laughter.

“ And is it to gild the waste of this heartless toy, — this vain wanton, — that Maximilien has dissipated the

honest inheritance and hard earnings of his fathers?" thought Camille. "Is it to breathe this enervating atmosphere, that he has deserted the wood and the valley?" continued he, gasping under the oppression of an air loaded with perfumes.

The hasty entrance of the object of his reflections interrupted their indignant course. "This is kind, indeed, Camille!" exclaimed his cousin, advancing towards him with a cordial welcome. "You have a mind superior to paltry resentment of our boyish squabbles. *Touche là, mon ami!* Give me a forgiving hand. You have delayed our meeting something of the longest, coz! — But, absent or present, your friendship has afforded me more than one timely lift."

"Your good father, Maximilien, was my earliest and best friend."

"While you are the *latest* and best my father's *son* can boast, — and thus the debt is acquitted; — which is more than I can say of my own."

"In truth, the representation of your affairs contained in your last letter ——"

"Hush, hush! — my hero of '*le Lyons d'or*,' do not open your financial budget before you have tasted my bread and salt. — Go! Flavie, — you waste your labour to sit simpering there. Your grimaces are quite thrown away on this stoic of the woods. — Go! and order a repast worthy of my cousin's welcome, and your own assiduity. — *Via!* — vanish! — let us see no more of you till the steam of an exquisite *consommé* overpowers your musk. — Camille will be otherwise as sick of you as I am."

Neither abashed nor resentful, Flavie disappeared at his command; but not so the amazement with which the uninitiated provincial listened to his cousin's novel tone of gallantry. To address a woman thus, — a woman whom he had loved, — who perhaps still loved him!

"And when did you visit the good woman at the farm? — I understand that drivelling dotard, old Navelles, added cunning to his insolence, — (no fox so crafty as a grey fox,) — and pushed me from my stool, only to place his own favourite, your mother, at Grand Moulin. Well, — better

Madelon Valazy, than no Valazy at all. — And how grows the walnut tree I planted by the gate? — how ——”

“ I cannot satisfy your curiosity, Max, on any point regarding our old home. I have never visited Grand Moulin since my mother’s instalment,” replied Camille.

“ Ay, ay, a prudent politician ! ”Twould be no jest to re-encounter one of old Navelles’s dictatorial admonitions ! You have too many crowns jingling in your pockets, Camille, to endure such solemn music now.”

“ Rather too much occupied in forwarding the interests of a firm whose liberality has been the foundation of my fortunes, to find leisure for a journey to Navelles.”

“ Like the rest of the world, your powers measure themselves by your inclinations. Your time can be stretched to compass a visit to our gay city ; while it contracts spasmodically at the bare mention of a visit to your old mother’s drowsy chimney-corner.”

“ Business alone has brought me to Paris.”

“ Bring you what will, my sagest of cousins ! pleasure shall *keep* you here, — I have some chosen friends to whom I must present you,—master spirits, who will one day write the world their debtor. — And Flavie — what think you of the Ninette of Navelles, in her Parisian costume? — What think you of the varnish we have added, to bring out the tone and colouring of the picture? — You smile, — I anticipate the sarcasm, — I forestall your comment on the *colouring* itself ! ”

“ You may win a race upon me for a *bon mot* at a very easy rate. I intended no illustration of Mademoiselle Flavie’s complexion ; but I own I considered her prettier with her simple village bodice and artless village manners.”

“ Ah ! you had always a genius for the pastoral ! — and now, you measure her charms with those of the nymphs of the Rhone. *N’importe !* We must refine your taste.”

“ Pardon me ! I judged your fair friend by a standard that needs no refinement ; by the noble simplicity of — of Mademoiselle de Navelles ; whom even yourself have acknowledged as an exquisite model of loveliness and taste.”

“ Of Madame de St. Florentin ? — By heavens, Camille,

I do not believe you have acquired a single new idea since we parted at Grand Moulin !”

“No new fancies, perhaps.”

“You look as if you longed to add that mine are sufficiently ruinous to suffice the family.”

“My dear cousin, you still over-rate my genius for satire. Leave me to my own predilections, — I wage no war with yours.”

“Just as you please. It is your object to be sententious rather than witty. So much the better, — I shall shiver no lance with you on that ground. But I see the boy has proved the father of the man ; you are still the grave, reserved Camille who conned his lesson so demurely, hanging to the old *curé*’s rusty surplice. You made a little involuntary bow when I named the Duc de Navelles, — just as my old doting father used to touch his cap at the sound ; and the blood still mounts to your temple when you refer to your foster-sister.”

“You, at least, Max, can be charged with no such sin. You are indescribably altered.”

“For the better ? — Come, — be courteous, — and say for the very best.”

“I will not prematurely pronounce your sentence,” replied Camille, gaily ; “but you are certainly more frank, — more cordial, — more ——”

“Mere knowledge of the world ! — Those who mingle in the mixed society of a capital have no leisure to be reserved, — no time to make mysteries and marvels out of nothing. Reserve is a provincial vice. We are so rich here in conversational talents, — such treasures of wit and information lie scattered upon the surface of our earth, — that no man cares to dig for hidden treasures.”

“It was not frankness of manner, but of heart, to which I referred.”

“As we grow older our hearts expand, — stretch like a familiar glove, and are worn as easily. ’Tis an art you have yet to learn, my trusty and well beloved cousin. But courage ! — Under my instructions you may soon go slipshod.”

“An infallible cause for stumbling. No ! Maximilien, I will see and judge your mode of happiness, before I either adopt or condemn your habits of life.”

CHAPTER VII.

More of your conversation would infect my brain ; being the herdsman of the beastly plebeians. The best of them were hereditary hangmen.

Coriolanus.

CAMILLE VALAZY was not long in accomplishing a more intimate acquaintance with the connections, the habits, and the projects of his cousin. The night following his arrival in Paris was devoted to the celebration of one of the orgies of the Jacobin faction : — orgies which served to minister with equal success to the social vices of a licentious crew, and mask those dark and powerful designs which were gradually undermining the reckless footsteps of the royalists.

The unpractised eye of the younger Valazy rested with undisguised amazement upon the group of patriots assembled in Maximilien's gorgeous habitation ; — a scene affording a singular contrast with the “greasy rogues” who appeared familiarly habituated to its exits and its entrances. He could not refrain from glancing from the buffets of spotless marble, the carved and sculptured seats, the antique lamps, and massive plate, — to the coarse and slovenly human figures clustered round the board ; while to them, those costly decorations, — except in the instance of a fine statue bearing the name of Brutus on its pedestal, and commanding the upper end of the room, — appeared as irrelevant and disgusting, as their disordered uncleanness to Camille. He had already observed that every thing belonging to Maximilien wore an appearance of the most studied elegance ; while his own dress and person assumed as elaborate a display of negligence. But the short unpowdered curls clustered round his forehead, and a cravat loosely knotted to display his fine throat, so singularly

became the Grecian outline of his head, that they might have been adopted to gratify his vanity, as much as to task with reproof the trimly neatness of the courtly *muscadin*, or satisfy the coarse prejudices of his party.

It was the beginning of the year 1789; ²—and the spirit of revolutionary excitement which had not yet broken forth into those overt acts of insubordination, of which the taking of the Bastille in the course of the summer proved the initial signal, — was slowly gathering to its full ripeness of mischief. Like vapours which condense their mephitic influence in the lowest depths of darkness, it brooded in expectation of its future prey. The names, therefore, severally announced to Valazy upon his entrance, though he recognised them as belonging to the accredited agents of the Jacobin party, did not cause his heart to leap within him, or oppress it with an overpowering mastery, such as they have since assumed over the mind of man. Danton, Marat, Barrère, Collot d'Herbois, Pétion, Louvet, St. Just, the Abbé Fauchet, and Robespierre, were successively presented to the provincial kinsman of their host; and the luxurious profusion of the repast to which they immediately addressed themselves, aided by copious libations, soon warmed their hearts into cordial intimacy with the new comer. They knew him to be a man of substantial fortune, and respectable influence in a populous district; and that in either character, he would form a valuable accession to their party. But they soon perceived that he was no weakling, to be hood-winked into a blind adoption of their principles, or stunned by empty vociferation; and thus stimulated to an unusual desire for victory, the mental gladiators rushed upon each other with powerful and earnest animation.

But if the mind of Camille Valazy were fitted to receive unharmed “food meet for strong men,” it was by no means constituted to digest without irritation the poisoned viands now set before him. Burning with youthful enthusiasm, and bewildered by dreams of social regeneration, he was a pure and disinterested partisan of civil and religious liberty; and sensible, as such, of the corruption of the existing order of things, was ardently desirous to behold both

the church and state of his native country cleansed from the dust and cobwebs of time, and restored to a becoming degree of purity. He had prepared himself to join in abhorrence of a rapacious and degraded priesthood ; but he now heard his ancient faith reviled,—his Creator blasphemed.—He had prepared himself to second their resistance to the innovations of the aristocracy, and the encroachments assumed as the prerogative of the crown by a ministry equally bold and feeble ;—but he now heard his anointed sovereign reviled as a driveller ; the overthrow of throne and altar calmly projected ; and measures devised and defended, whose covenants could be only sealed by the profuse outpouring of human blood.

Till he listened to the intemperate menaces and ferocious projects of Maximilien's guests, he had considered himself enrolled in the liberal party. With rash self-committal, he had trodden the first steps of a green ascent, when a fiery crater poured over his head a shower of inflammatory missiles ; and as he listened to the eruptive roar of the volcano, he trembled, not only for himself, but for the country lying within its scope of evil.

The horrors of civil anarchy rose shadowed before his eyes, like the menacing spectres in the vision of Macbeth. He felt how impure must be the worship, of which the arch-priests reeled in licentious audacity on the threshold of their sanctuary ; and whose pernicious efforts would probably fan the pure light kindled upon the altar of liberty, until its gathering flames extended over the earth, even unto utter devastation. The spirit of Camille sank rebuked, when he remembered how often he had avowed himself a fellow-labourer in the cause he now heard advocated with such demoniacal fierceness, with such blasphemous invectives.

Among the interlocutors in the bold arguments by which these feelings were awakened, Robespierre alone excited his transitory sympathy. But he remembered that the real character of this ferocious man was still undeveloped. At the period of Camille's visit to Paris, Maximilian Robespierre was regarded in his party, as a generous enthusiast, —simple, candid, disinterested, and exclusively devoted to

the cause of the people.* They acknowledged that he was a man ungifted with superior talents ; that his eloquence was purely declamatory, without system, and without conclusion ; “ *la Patrie !* ” — that magic word, which possesses in the ears of Frenchmen an inherent eloquence, — being the still recurring embellishment of his vague but brilliant orations. He looked to others for the care of every measure of redress. He had no plans to propose. He left to Danton the task of suggesting expedients, — a task for which he was eminently qualified by the boldness of his conceptions, the precision of his ideas, and the stern consistency of his mind.

But while the opinions of Robespierre seemed prompted by the frenzy of fanaticism, — so artfully did he manage to disguise his fierce ambition, — Danton himself, lost in voluptuous indolence, was gradually sinking into the licentiousness, which induced him to look forward with eagerness to a disorganised state of society. The hope of escaping the chastisement incurred by his vices enlisted his voice in the advocacy of an irregular mode of government.

But of all this celebrated group, the person whose importance appeared to Camille the least explicable, was Marat. Disgusting and deformed in his person, feeble in his enunciation, and frankly avowing the rapacity of his views, this “ *funfuron de crimes* ” would never have risen above his calling as an outcast from all the better ties of human nature, but for the singular governance he contrived to acquire over the minds of the people, through the infamous journal of which he was the editor. By addressing himself with adroitness to the passions of the mob, and affecting a tone of hearty cordiality in its cause, he created for himself a spell of authoritative influence, which he afterwards so memorably abused.

His pen was worthy the vile service to which it was devoted. But there were other hands more respectable, and consequently more dangerous, which directed the periodical press towards the same purposes ; — the licentious Louvet,

* Meillan's Memoirs.

—the sentimental Camille Desmoulins ; — Barrère, skilled by the art of plausible misrepresentation,

To vindicate the wrong, and warp the right ;

Hébert, the witty libellist of the queen ; — St. Just, the echo and tool of Robespierre ; — Laclos, — Raymond, — Fabre d'Eglantine, — these, and others of equal talents, if not of similar celebrity, were diligently employed in the daily diffusion of the tenets of Jacobinism.

But although he occasionally cast his eyes on these Journals, the organs of the democratic party, Camille Valazy had been hitherto unaware of the designs and the desperation of their writers. He had believed their utmost aim coincident with his own ; — to strip the throne of its unnatural privileges, — to limit the influence of the aristocracy, — and, in the formation of a new constitution, raise the *tiers état* to its becoming importance. There were times, indeed, when the tenacity with which Louis appeared inclined to cling to the prerogative of his crown, — a tenacity popularly attributed to the influence of despotic Austrian blood, — coupled with the feebleness which appeared incapable of retaining the rights thus vainly cherished, — induced him to admit the probability that an unqualified revolution must follow the first innovation marking the triumph of the popular party ; which would probably become irritated by the royal resistance, and encouraged by its defeat.

But his amazement was great indeed, when he listened to an assertion made by Danton, that the deposition, — nay, the *sacrifice* of the king and queen, — would be required by that powerful body, which the court of Versailles designated as the *canaille* ; while Barrère fiercely rejoined, that “ the roots of the tree of liberty were never known to flourish till watered with copious libations of the blood of kings : — and that the vessel of the Revolution could only reach its haven floating on the waves of a crimson sea.” *

“ A nation,” retorted St. Just, “ is best and most effectually regenerated amid heaps of corpses !” *

Camille, who had hitherto avoided all share in their

* On the trial of Louis XVI.

conversation, could no longer resist expressing his indignant rejection of these sanguinary opinions.

"As an inhabitant of the second city in the kingdom," said he, "I have an opportunity of judging the popular temper on these subjects; and I holdly assert that, with the exception of a few lawless and godless ruffians, the people of France are still unseduced from their loyalty; and that however they may be disposed to resist oppression and the wanton squandering of Cæsar's tribute money, they would rally round the white banner of their kings, on the first appeal to their hereditary affection.—A name is every thing in France; and the charm centred in that of Bourbon, will never become obliterated!"

"A spy,—a felon spy!—a skulking royalist,—some abject minion from Versailles!" resounded on all sides, on the conclusion of his bold address; while Camille, calmly disclaiming their accusations, replied by a renewal of his offence.

"If there be a man of honour present here," said he, "let him *singly* repeat but one of the epithets so liberally bestowed *en masse*, and he will find that I know *how* and *where* to defend myself and my cause; for it is that of the liberal and *honest* portion of my countrymen."

Maximilien now interfered as a mediator between his infuriated guests and the object of their suspicions; apologising for his cousin's petulance, ~~and~~ asserting that his choler had been excited by the abuse lavished in the course of their arguments upon the aristocratic patron of his youth. The character of the Duc de Navelles had, in truth, been handled among them with the most insolent bitterness; for as a member of the ministry instrumental in placing Marie Antoinette on the throne, and a notorious partisan of the emperor, he was regarded with abhorrence by the revolutionary faction. Eagerly seizing an excuse to qualify the expression of their intemperance, and shrinking with the ordinary cowardice of assassins from the aspect of heroic enthusiasm,—even beardless as that of the younger Valazy,—they expressed their regret that his personal friendships and predilections should have been wounded by their strictures. A hollow truce followed this

apology ; and Maximilien, having warmly implored them to re-seat themselves, and resume their convivialities, the angry disputants could not but follow up their pacific overtures. They attempted every ordinary effort by which the flagging gaiety of an ill-assorted meeting is stimulated into the semblance of harmony. The song went round, — but its mirth was polluted with obscenity ; the jest rebounded from lip to lip, — but it raised only the hollow laughter fitting its fiendish malignity ; the cup was drained, — but it was with the coarse sensuality of inebriation ; — and still, at intervals, many a furious glance and gloomy scowl was furtively directed towards Camille. The thread of their festivity was broken. Mistrust and disunion had crept among them ; and long before their usual hour of separation, the party seized some frivolous pretext to disperse.

“ And these Maximilien, — these are your vaunted friends ! ” exclaimed Camille, as the latest lingerer left the room ; — “ men who unite the valour of the bravo, the consistency of the hireling, the drivelling eloquence of the novelist, and the morals of the gallies ! Is it from the crooked policy of wretches such as these, we are to expect that national regeneration which your friend, St. Just, would seek in a baptism of blood ? — Is it from a lazaret-house we must court the pure impulses of health ? ” — Is it from the caverns of vice we must listen for the oracles of the gods ? ” —

“ My dear and very classical friend ! ” replied Maximilien, attempting to smother by idle *persiflage* the generous enthusiasm of his cousin ; “ you are yourself inclined to-night to play the Oracle ! Are these fits of inspiration frequent with you ? ”

“ As you have heard my confession of political faith this night, so will you *ever* hear it. I hold myself the champion of a liberal monarchy.”

“ Of a free tyranny, — a hot moonlight, — a cold meridian ! — discerning preference ! — I wish you no worse calamity than the fulfilment of your own desires ! — But I confess I was ignorant that the worthy weavers of Lyons affect to cut their doublets *à la Henri Quatre* ; or only lay them aside to bare their servile backs to the scourge of his

descendants. Nay, never look so sublimely indignant!—You seem expiring with the anguish of stifled magnanimity.”

“Rather with shame for my cousin,—with sorrow for my country.”

“A vile antithesis!—Banish, I pray you, all such obsolete forms of speech. ‘*Soyez de votre siècle!*’ Liberty and patriotism are the order of the day, good coz; and the order of the day, you know, is a peremptory order.”

“Maximilien!” allow me one further word of exposition; or rather allow me to suppose—to *trust*—that your necessities—which, believe me, are no longer a secret—have enrolled you in this accursed faction.”

Valazy, sobered by the earnest tone assumed by his cousin, now haughtily replied that he wished to shelter himself under no such inference.

“Without losing my time,” said he, “in challenging your right of interrogation, I hesitate not to assure you, that every axiom advanced this night by my friends obtains my hearty concurrence. The deliverers of an enslaved nation must not be startled, like a sickly wench, at the sight of a few red drops. For what is the importance of the whole existing human race, compared with the welfare of future generations?—What matters it, if a few coroneted heads be given up to the axe, to secure successive ages of tranquil government?—I am no advocate for bootless slaughter; but I heartily believe that the greater the transpiration of the social body, the more perfect its health.—And, after all,” he continued, again affecting a hideous tone of pleasantry, “the guillotine is but a bed a little less luxurious than those to which the aristocrats have accustomed themselves.”

“And may I inquire,” said Camille, shuddering as he spoke, “whether the party to which you assert yourself as belonging of your own free choice, is truly so numerous and so potently organised, as my late courteous companions persisted in declaring?”

“Undoubtedly! On the word of a kinsman and a true man, I was present some nights ago at a secret assembly, where four thousand persons affixed their signature to a

measure, which I must refrain from defining to so loyal a subject and thin-skinned a politician, as my cousin Camille."

"Then God have mercy upon our country!" said Camille, with fervent solemnity.

"Amen,—amen! for with a starving population, an absolute monarch, and a profuse and licentious queen, she has need of all the mercy which the universe can spare!—But her day and ours approaches, Camille!—When the new light dawns, may it show you to me in the character of a friend."

CHAPTER VIII.

How now, my lord!

Will the king join this piece of work?

Pol.—And the queen too, and that presently.

Bid the players make haste.

Hamlet.

CAMILLE VALAZY retired from his cousin's Saturnalia to a sleepless pillow; where, again and again, the momentous revelations of which he had been an involuntary auditor, seemed to grate upon his ear, and startle his harassed mind. But the more he reflected upon the characters of those among whom the omens had been interpreted, the more he was inclined to attribute their protestations to the swaggering of groundless self-confidence. "The bee wandering among the poisoned plants of the Savannah," said he, "is said to gather only infected honey. Why then give faith to the testimony of such men as Marat and Danton?"

But notwithstanding the self-reproval of young Valazy, he could not altogether mistrust the declarations of Maximilien's jacobinical associates; and it was with an aching head and heavy heart, that he rose the following morning to receive the appointed visit of Monsieur Delplanque,—a rich silk mercer of the Rue St. Honoré, with whose house

his own maintained commercial relations. After an hour devoted to the regulation of their concerns, during which the obligations of debtor and creditor were satisfactorily adjusted, the smirking man of the counter, polite as a court calendar, and apparently desirous of condescending from his awful eminence as "*mercier breveté de sa majesté*," in favour of the substantial credit of his provincial correspondent, glanced upon his own elaborate array, his *habit à galons*, and *perruque à l'oiseau royal*, observing that he was compelled to assume a court dress, in order to conduct his daughter to Versailles.

"Indeed," exclaimed the provincial, — who had been somewhat curious to know for what purpose the knight of the cll-wand had girded on the slender steel sword, which dangled importunately between his almost equally slender legs.

"Yes ! Monsieur Valazy ; we Parisians find it necessary to hold our time and our persons at the disposal of the court. Some days ago, I was honoured with the commands of Madame Thibaut, to exhibit at Versailles a few *demiesaison* novelties ; and having ventured to take with me my daughter, Mademoiselle Euphroisie, to assist in disposing and displaying them to advantage, her dexterity and modest demeanour attracted the favourable notice of madame ; and ——"

"She engaged your young lady as her *femme de chambre* ?" observed Camille, negligently, and with wandering thoughts.

"Sir !" ejaculated the amazed Delplanque, stretching himself out like one of his own lustrings.

"The talents of mademoiselle will, no doubt, do honour to her choice."

"A *femme de chambre* ! — my daughter ! — the most accomplished young lady — the richest heiress of the parish of St. Honoré, a *femme de chambre* ! — *Sacré bleu* ! " —

Camille rose in explanation of an error which it was difficult to qualify ; but the agitation with which old Delplanque continued to smooth down his ruffles, and his frequent interruptions of "*Une femme de chambre ! que diable !*" — filled up the pauses of his harangue. The mercer

of her most christian majesty, feeling conscious, however, that graciousness became the lofty sphere in which he moved, and recurring to certain views he had long entertained on the merchant of Lyons, at length accepted with affability the proffered olive branch.

"Ah ! I perceive your mistake. You intended to say, '*Demoiselle de compagnie de madame la surintendante de la reine !*' Quite another affair — quite another affair ! But to return to my little narrative. We visited Versailles, sir, as I before informed you ; we were welcomed with the most gratifying urbanity, as I now acquaint you ; — and we were honoured by an especial token of royal favour."

Delplanque paused, either to fillip a particle of dust from off his silken vest, or stimulate the curiosity of his auditor. But Camille, on this occasion, prudently refrained from anticipating the nature of a distinction adapted to the daughter of her majesty's mercer.

"Yes ! my young friend, a token of the most flattering favour," continued the old man, taking from his pocket a perfumed play-bill elegantly printed on some of his own white satin ; which, with spectacles on nose, he proceeded in a pompous voice to recite.

THEATRE DE LA REINE.

On donnera ce soir, Mardi 20 Avril, 1789, une première représentation de

LA GAGEURE IMPREVUE,

<i>Madame de Clancelle</i>	Sa Majesté la Reine,
<i>Gotté</i>	Madame la ———
, &c. &c.	

"This play-bill, Monsieur Valazy," said Delplanque, suddenly interrupting himself through a laudable preference of his own prose to that of other people, — "this play-bill, sir, enveloped tickets of admission for myself and Euphrosine, to her majesty's most private and particular theatre of the Petit Trianon ; a favour rarely conceded even to those permanently attached to the household. But I have not yet disclosed the most gratifying incident of the affair," he continued, bowing as if the mere recitation of the royal name had filled his great soul with all the urbanity of the *Œil de Bœuf*, — "I say the most gratifying, inasmuch as

I trust it will procure my daughter and myself the advantage of Monsieur Valazy's society throughout the pleasures of the evening. Know, then, that the amiable Madame Thibaut enhanced the value of her gift by presenting me with an admission-ticket for a second gentleman; conjecturing that, in all human probability, a young lady gifted with the beauty, prospects, and accomplishments of my Euphrosine, (she is Grétry's favourite pupil, Monsieur Valazy!) could not be without an admirer." And with another flourish, Delplanque drew forth the precious talisman, and placed it at the disposal of Camille, who was prompted by a first impulse to decline a gift appearing to imply a degree of devotion towards Mademoiselle Euphrosine, such as he was by no means inclined to assume. A second consideration induced him to accept the offer of his new and gracious protector.

"I will become a witness to the excesses of this vilified court, I will look upon this haughty queen and her licentious train!" said he, within himself, as he entered Delplanque's plain but respectable-looking equipage; and under his benign instructions, was driven to the shops most in vogue, to equip himself as became the royal presence.

"You will do me the pleasure, sir," said the old man, authoritatively addressing a fashionable tailor, who had undertaken to make the requisite alterations in a suit of *velours épinglé, fond vert du Nil*, which some capricious courtier had left on his hands, "you will do me the pleasure to forward this gentleman's dress, in the course of an hour or two, to my house in the Rue St. Honoré:—he dines with me."

"And whom have I the honour of addressing?" inquired the respectful king of shreds and patches.

"The mercer of her majesty!" said Delplanque, in a tone that might have served to herald an ambassador from the Sublime Porte.

The tailor bowed still lower at a designation so satisfactory to his financial calculations. "The safest of customers!" said he to himself. "Ready money!" muttered the foreman, as he brandished his needle; and their united labours faithfully fulfilled their share of the contract

to bestow upon the handsome young provincial the air of a prince. Even Mademoiselle Euphrosine regarded her esquire of the evening with unqualified approbation. Nor was Valazy less pleased with the simplicity of her manners, and the gentle deference of her address to her father,—a grace which, throughout every rank of society, distinguishes the females of France. He scarcely observed, indeed, the graceful outline of her head and waist, the dazzling fairness of her complexion, or the surpassing sweetness of her dimpled smile: a smile equally radiant still illuminated the recesses of his bosom, neutralising the attraction of all other charms; and even if the soft tones of Euphrosine's voice had found their way to his ear, they would have been quickly overpowered by the sonorous eloquence of her pompous father; who, in compassion to the rustic ignorance of his companion, now proceeded, as they drove leisurely along the route to Versailles, to illustrate the play-bill and dramatis personæ, with notes explanatory of his own.

“Hem! hem! *voyons, voyons!* Who shall we have to-night?—Aha! ‘Madame la Duchesse de Polignac,’ the friend of the queen; an object of admiration to the whole court—of jealousy to the whole city—of adoration to a certain royal prince who shall be nameless. ‘Madame la Princesse de Lamballe,’ the loveliest flower of Versailles; a daughter of the royal house of Savoy, and daughter-in-law to the Duc de Penthièvre. Ah! Monsieur Valazy,—could you but see her in a polonoise of brocaded silk, *couleur des cheveux de la reine*,—the new colour, sir, which I have lately invented!—As the queen’s mercer by appointment, such little attentions are expected at my hands.—Hen! hem!—Let me see—let me see—who have we next on our list?—‘Madame la Marquise de St. Florentin;’ an angel, Monsieur Valazy, a very angel!—The most adorable woman in Paris! I have only to furnish her a piece of taffeta, and it becomes the fashion in a week!”

While the enthusiastic Sieur Delplanque continued to apotheosise the beauties of the court whose titles graced at once his ledger and the bill before him, Euphrosine was

pondering over the extraordinary confusion which suddenly manifested itself in the countenance of Monsieur Valazy, and was succeeded by as marked a paleness. Believing him to be indisposed, she silently let down the glass of the chariot ; but on perceiving that even with this accession of air he still gasped for breath, she directed the attention of her father towards his guest.

“ Merciful Heavens ! what an alarming perturbation ! — Was Monsieur Valazy unwell ? — was he subject to these nervous attacks ? — Perhaps the *purée à la Pompadour* had been too much for his digestion ; — the *Eau doré* too powerful ? — ”

“ By no means ; but — ”

“ Was Monsieur Valazy inclined to return to Paris ? ”

“ On no account ; but — ”

“ Would Monsieur Valazy, on arriving at Versailles, desire to consult the physician, — surgeon, — apothecary, — or pharmacien of her majesty ? — The name of Delplanque would gain access to the whole faculty ; — he had therefore only to speak.”

No ! — Monsieur Valazy expressed himself already recovered from his seizure. And Euphrosine, detecting with the tact of her sex, Camille’s anxiety to divert the attention of his companions, readily engaged her father in a critical comparison of the various physicians attached to the household ; while Valazy, by a strong effort, regained his composure.

Those who, habituated to the publicity of the world, are accustomed to see their holiest sentiments exposed to the scrutiny of society, can ill imagine the feelings of a visionary who, having nursed in solitude some delirium of the heart, shielded its sweet fancies from observation, guarded its hallowed object within an unapproachable shrine, and madly lavished there its silent fervour of devotion, is suddenly required to hear “ the one loved name ” pronounced in the vulgar tone of every-day comment ! — Valazy, who had cherished with such an excess of susceptibility his passion for the lovely companion of his childhood, — who had contemplated her noble graces till his eye rested with dissatisfaction upon every meaner form, — who had preserved

through time and absence that beauteous image unweakened, unimpaired, — who slept but to dream of her, and waked but to wonder that the spell still hovered unrelaxingly on his lips, — who

Went on, gathering sweet pain
About his fancy, till it thrilled again,

was not prepared to see his idol dragged out for common worship, — named with indifference, — perhaps with blame or reproach. His contempt for Delplanque deepened into disgust, as being the origin of his sufferings; and it was not till they reached the outskirts of Versailles, that he had sufficiently regained his composure to re-assure his anxious companions, by entering into conversation.

Having argued himself into some degree of self-command, he began to rejoice that he had been thus unwittingly betrayed into the presence of the woman he idolised. “I shall find,” thought he, in wilful self-deception, “that time has subdued the vehemence of my vain, my romantic attachment. I shall find that I can gaze on my mother’s precious nursling with the same pure spirit of adoration that a Persian regards the sun. I shall see her — shall see that face upon whose every lineament my memory has dwelt so fondly. Unseen — unsuspected — uncared for, — I shall look upon her blessed face again !”

His train of reflections was interrupted by the complacent self-gratulation with which the “mercier by appointment” pointed out to his notice that, though their carriage bore no armorial decorations, his card was a sufficient passport with the Swiss to admit it into the court-yard.

“The name of Delplanque, you perceive — my estimable young friend — the humble name of Delplanque is equivalent to a peerage !”

But the busy loquacity of the elated cit of the *Rue St. Honoré* was soon subdued into the deferential composure fitting the time and place; and having passed in safety “the gates, the guards, the wall,” and followed the guidance of an usher of the court to their appointed post, the little party found itself seated in a portion of the pit railed off for the accommodation of a few spectators, comprising the most respectable inhabitants of the town of Versailles,

and one or two eminent purveyors of the court ; among whom, as indeed among the more exalted portion of the audience, the appearance of the beautiful Euphrosine excited a general murmur of admiration. But Camille Valazy marked not the cause — noted not the effect — gazed not on the burning blushes of his conscious companion.— One thought — one image — occupied his mind — *Emiline* — only *Emiline* !

CHAPTER IX.

Une erreur de fait jette un homme sage dans le ridicule. Il y a de petites règles, des devoirs, des bienséances, attachées aux lieux, aux temps, aux personnes, qui ne se devinent point à force d'esprit, et que l'usage apprend sans peine.—LA BRUYÈRE.

THEY were among the earliest spectators ; a circumstance attributed by the polite Delplanque to his desire that his country correspondent might be the more completely initiated into the mysteries of the scene. As the boxes became gradually filled with all that was illustrious and lovely in the land, Euphrosine proceeded to enlighten the mind of the pre-occupied and indifferent Camille, by announcing the court-beauties familiar to her knowledge through her participations in the details of her father's business.

But her gentle whispers were urged in vain. Neither the brilliantly illuminated theatre, — the exquisitely modulated orchestra, — the personages who negligently lent their charms to the front rows of the boxes, — nor the still lovelier one who blushed so humbly beside him, were capable of fixing his attention. Camille remained bewildered and unobservant ; till, on the entrance of a group of lovely children into the stage-box, a murmur arose from the part of the theatre in which he sat, of “ *Vive Monseigneur le Dauphin — Vive Madame !* ”

At the suggestion of Madame Mackau, their sub-gover-

ness, these infantine representatives of royalty gracefully acknowledged the applause which greeted their arrival; while the eyes of Camille remained riveted upon their box. Euphrosine, observant of the air of interest with which he gazed on the "Children of France," and believing it to be excited by the delicate appearance of the young dauphin, immediately began a loyal refutation of the vulgar opinion that he did not share the affections of his mother equally with madame royale and the Duc de Normandie.

But it was not the dauphin's precarious condition, nor the imputed alienation of the queen's attachment, which absorbed the attention of Valazy. Several children of the nobility had been admitted into the royal box; and among them, a fairy girl, with long glossy brown curls overhanging her little shoulders, whom Camille could have avouched that he had carried a thousand times in his arms, and bestowed a thousand kisses on those waxen cheeks, affording a faultless model of infantine beauty. "It is Emiline!" he murmured—"My own Emiline!"

"It is, indeed, the little Emiline de St. Florentin," observed the astonished Euphrosine; but she had no time for farther explanations. The curtain at that moment drew up, and discovered Marie Antoinette in all the splendour of her youthful beauty, — her glistening hair not yet blanched by the vigils of anxious sorrow, nor her clear blue triumphant eyes sullied by tears of humiliation. Her dress was adjusted with the perfection of elegance which was one of her sins in the eyes of the multitude; and even the costume of her attendant was of the choicest fashion. That attendant was the Marquise de St. Florentin.

"Mamma, dearest mamma!" exclaimed the startled cherub of the stage box, clapping her little hands in uncontrollable ecstasy; while, notwithstanding the prolonged *st, st*, resounding through the house, every spectator sympathised in the affectionate rapture of the delighted child.

"Ah! there are few such mothers!!" — whispered a venerable old man who was seated beside Valazy.

"Respectable in *all* the relations of life!" was the rejoinder of the person to whom his comment was addressed. "As daughter — wife — mother — friend — mistress —

not a disparaging word has ever been attached to the name of Madame de St. Florentin."

It was fortunate for Camille that the place assigned him by the usher in waiting enabled him to recline against an adjoining pillar. Confused murmurs rang in his ears, and more than his former death-like faintness overcame him, when the first melting accents of Emiline's voice stole upon his heart. To support those smiles, unconsciously directed towards himself; to hear the playful modulations of that voice, — and yet endure the presence and the gaze of thousands, — was a task beyond his fortitude. Motioning, therefore, to his friends, to let him depart unnoticed, he profited by the first change of scenery to escape from the theatre.

The chamberlain in waiting at the entrance, followed him into the corridor, to ascertain the cause of this hasty and perturbed exit; but Camille, heedless or unconscious of his breach of etiquette, rushed down the great staircase towards the air, precipitately crossed the court-yard, and with a distracted step and gesture, hastened onwards without a pause, till he reached the avenue De Madrid. Breathless from speed and emotion, he staggered towards the bank; and throwing himself on the grass, relieved the horrible oppression which overcame him, by an uncontrollable burst of tears. Scarcely had he succeeded in stifling his almost convulsive sobs, when he perceived that two officers of the royal body-guard were standing by his side.

"What means this intrusion, gentlemen?" he exclaimed, starting up in painful consciousness of the ridicule which might attach itself to a predicament, rendered provokingly apparent by the importunate radiance of a bright moon, shining through the still leafless branches.

"I believe, sir, I may consider the object of my intrusion sufficiently answered," replied the *garde du corps*, in a tone of mild sympathy. "The officer on guard, alarmed by your abrupt and unceremonious departure, commanded me to trace your route."

"As a madman?" observed Camille, with bitterness; — "or possibly, as an assassin?"

"In this season of popular excitement," replied the

stranger, "it becomes the duty of all who share in guarding the safety and well-being of the royal family, to keep a jealous eye upon the movements of such strangers as appear to consider the presence of their sovereign no restraint on their caprices. In the present instance, your involuntary betrayal of affliction in my presence, — pardon me, sir, if I allude to that which gives you pain, — becomes the warrant of your innocence."

The young officer would have proceeded in the same considerate tone, when a police officer with two attendants, — evidently charged to reinforce the military scouts, — came up to the party; and with rough interrogation, demanded the name and residence of the stranger.

"Has this fellow authority for his impertinence?" inquired the indignant Camille, of the *garde du corps* by whom he had been first addressed.

"The gentleman is the servant of his majesty," replied the young officer; "and you will not, I am persuaded, resist an inquiry which purports no offence towards yourself."

"Your name, young man?" persisted the officer of police.

"Valazy — merchant of Lyons."

"A name of no good omen, you will allow?" — exclaimed the man, addressing his observations to the two *gardes du corps*. "Some kinsman, I doubt not, of the notorious Jacobin."

"It is the name of a loyal subject," replied Camille, turning fiercely upon his interrogator, "were he kin to a thousand Jacobins!"

"You will, in that case, offer no resistance to the search I am commanded to make on your person. A loyal subject disputes not the mandates of his sovereign."

"How say you, gentlemen?" said Valazy, who now began to understand the nature of the suspicions his precipitation had incurred. "Have I subjected myself to this humiliating scrutiny?"

"You will expose yourself to less annoyance by submitting quietly to an inquisition, which I am persuaded will produce only a result honourable to yourself," replied

the elder of the officers, — a counsel with which Valazy complied without further demur; and great was their satisfaction, — for the distress of mind betrayed by the handsome young stranger had interested them in his behalf, — when the search thus unceremoniously instituted brought to light neither weapon nor implement more dangerous than a well-stored pocket-book.

Previous to an operation which the irritated feelings of the prisoner rendered galling beyond description, the party had been invited by the porter of a château adjoining the road, to enter his lodge; where, flambeau in hand, he assisted* to throw light upon the investigation. All was now cleared up. The officer of police grew courteous as a chamberlain at the sight of his intended prisoner's morocco treasury; the *gardes du corps* renewed the expressions of their regret at the consequences which had visited his inadvertence; and Camille, a few inches taller than usual, was about to leave the lodge, when an officer, apparently of the household, in a uniform brilliantly decorated, galloped to the door; and stooping from his horse, received the respectful report of the subordinates, of which a few detached sentences uttered by the *gardes du corps* reached the tingling ears of its object.

“Totally unarmed — sudden indisposition — certainly no assassin — respectable merchant from Lyons — Camille Valazy by name —”

“Camille Valazy of Lyons?” shouted the officer, leaping from his horse, and abruptly entering the lodge. “Valazy! my worthy friend — when next you permit your brains to go wool-gathering in the royal presence, for Heaven’s sake — and for your own — warn your friends of your infirmity; or one of these romantic vagaries of yours may chance to leave you in one of the dungeons of the Tour de la Bazinière. The Bastille has opened her rapacious jaws to devour many a prisoner on grounds less suspicious. You may retire, gentlemen,” he exclaimed, addressing the other three; “and since you will precede me at the palace, be so obliging as to acquaint the Duc de Liancourt, who is in waiting to-night, that the person whose abrupt departure from the theatre has given rise to such idle

alarm is a gentleman, of whose good intentions and loyal sentiments Madame de St. Florentin will hold herself responsible to her majesty, should the exaggerated reports in circulation reach the ear of the queen."

The Marquis de St. Florentin — whom fortune had thus opportunely brought to Camille's assistance — was now left alone with his young protégé; and struck by the pallor of recent indisposition which overspread his countenance, insisted that he should rest himself for a few minutes, while the officious old porter procured him the refreshment of a glass of water.

"I perceive with regret that you are really ill," observed the marquis, with the kindest interest. "I shall therefore defer my exhortation till a more convenient season. Emiline will grieve to find that I have renewed my acquaintance with her foster-brother under circumstances in every point of view so unsatisfactory. I often remind her, Camille, of the *chasse au chevreuil* I used to have with you, during my vacation, in the forest of Navelles, — particularly when I wish to disparage the royal battues of Fontainebleau."

"Five years have elapsed, Monsieur le Marquis, since my days of servitude at Navelles."

"Ay, ay! we have heard, through your good mother, Camille, of your advancing prosperity. But Madelon neglected to inform us that you were grown too proud to visit your old friends."

"My visit to Paris has been one of mere business."

"It *has* been that which *you* pleased; — I trust it will *become* pleasing to others, — to ourselves, your oldest friends. To-morrow, sir, we return to town; and you must take up your quarters in the Hôtel St. Florentin."

Camille retained sufficient presence of mind to assure the marquis, that an immediate necessity for his return to Lyons forbade him to profit by so much intended kindness.

"How! not delay your departure for a single day, that you may bestow it on your earliest friend and playmate?" cried the marquis.

"I am deeply sensible of the Marchioness de St. Florentin's condescension, — though it simply repays the

respect of my devotion towards herself, — towards her family," replied Camille. "In bidding you adieu, monsieur le marquis, believe me grateful for your gracious intention."

"I will extend my faith to an almost impossible limit, and believe in your good-will, though you look and speak as if you could knock me down without remorse," cried St. Florentin. "One word more," continued he, in a lower tone. "I trust, Camille, you have not passed your time during this hasty visit in the society of your cousin? — Maximilien has become a marked man; and most obnoxious to the well-thinking part of the community."

"I fear it is impossible for me to take on myself the championship which our near connection might seem to dictate," replied Valazy. "I have spoken with my cousin only twice during as many years."

"Good — good! Emiline will rejoice to hear that a connection so unpromising for your reputation is broken off. But you must not think, Camille, of returning to Paris on foot, in your present feeble condition," continued St. Florentin, with an air of friendly consideration. "Since you do not feel equal to wait the departure of your friends, remain here for five minutes, and I will send you an equipage. Nay! no remonstrance — no re-assumption of your air of magnanimous disdain!"

Camille smiled.

"Come! all is right again! — You look like yourself, *your boy-self*, when you are cheerful. And now, good-night, Valazy. Let your friends hear often of your welfare!" — and having cordially shaken him by the hand, the marquis hastily remounted his horse. In another moment, the clatter of distant hoofs announced his hurried departure; and the sound was altogether lost, before Valazy could recover from his stupefaction.

In less than a quarter of an hour, a well-appointed carriage drove up to the lodge, whose lackeys, in the gorgeous St. Florentin livery, wearing bouquets as large as bushes, inquired of the stranger to what quarter of Paris he wished to be conveyed.

As he rolled rapidly along, at the impetuous pace of the

blood-horses then in fashion, Camille, leaning from exhaustion against the silken cushions, recalled to mind that a few short hours before, the cheek of Emiline might have rested on the self-same spot. He detected the *Cipre* perfume which she habitually wore. A flower lay upon the seat, which, from its freshness, he believed to have formed part of the decoration of her dress.— He seized it, and for an instant was about to press it to his lips, and make it his own; then throwing it from him with equal impetuosity, he disclaimed the sickly and forbidden sentiment which rendered it precious to his heart.

“ She is the beloved and loving wife of another,” said he; — “ to *me*, the phantom of a dream! — And what if her presence have power to stir my blood — her voice to suspend my breath. Is it not the mere seclusion of my life which has preserved their influence unimpaired? — Had I mingled — were I *now* to mingle, in this giddy joyous crowd — should I not teach myself to dismiss this chimera from my brain, — should I not learn to consider her but as one of the fairest of its gilded puppets? — And shall I meanly remain the slave of circumstances? — Out on my folly! — Emiline is nothing, or shall *become* nothing, to my heart!”

Arrived at Paris, he flung a louis-d’or to the powdered jackanapes who scornfully sought out his obscure lodging; and who despised him only the more for his exaggerated liberality.

Valazy’s slumbers that night were scarcely less disturbed than on the preceding one. So ardently did he labour to forget Emiline, that he thought and dreamed only of herself.

*Pour chasser de sa souvenance
L’am secret,
On ressent bien de la souffrance
Pour peu d’effèt.
Une si douce fantaisie
Toujours revient;
En songeant qu’il faut qu’on l’oublie
On s’en souvient!*

CHAPTER X.

O l'enuyeux conteur !
Jamais on ne le voit sortir du grand seigneur.
Dans le brillant commerce il se mêle sans cesse,
Et ne cite jamais que duc, prince, ou princesse.

MOLIERE.

ALARMED by the probability of being molested by further kindness on the part of the St. Florentin family, Camille rose with a determination to quit Paris with the mail-courier that very evening ; and was projecting a visit of explanation and adieu to the *mercier breveté de sa majesté*," when the old gentleman himself entered the room.

Though Delplanque no longer wore his dress of ceremony, his step was far statelier and his manner more dignified than before. After a very formal inquiry after the health of Monsieur Valazy, he began to express his regret, or more accurately, his displeasure, that the indisposition or caprice betrayed by his young correspondent on the preceding evening should have exposed himself and his daughter to the most alarming suspicions.

"Nay !" exclaimed the irate old gentleman, extending with one hand his gold-headed cane, and with the other his ponderous agate snuff-box, "even my loyal reputation, and a respectability of thirty years of solid credit, has been endangered by your petulance. You have committed me with the court of Versailles, Monsieur Valazy—cruelly committed me ; and I consider it essential to seek an audience of the minister of the interior for my disculpation. I have already waited in private upon the Marquis de St. Florentin ; who, I understand, was deputed by her majesty to inquire into the affair ; and have forced him to acknowledge the improbability that a man of my standing and experience should share in that hot-headed infraction of propriety, which might be very natural in a young provincial like yourself."

"You surely have not been so importunate."

"Importunate! — *me* — Delplanque, *mercier breveté de sa majesté* — importunate? My dear sir, you do not justly appreciate the mischiefs of being classed among the friends and associates of a Jacobin, — a stigma which your inadvertent folly has fixed upon yourself. No, sir! I consulted my much esteemed friend, *monsieur le prévôt des marchands*, in this exigency, who advises your immediate return to Lyons, and my own most active ——"

"Without recognising the *prevôt des marchands*' right of admonition, or seeking counsel from friend or foe, — nay, without further consideration of a very trifling and equally misconstrued incident, — I have come to a similar conclusion. — I leave Paris. Monsieur Delplanque, this very evening."

"So much the better, — so much the better. I rejoice to see that my authority has its due weight with you. Ignorant as you are of the world, friendless in Paris, and led away by romantic exaltation of mind, I consider myself responsible for your safety to my worthy correspondents, the Sieurs Dacquin, of Lyons. My good young friend! you have no doubt an excellent heart, — I do not dispute its excellence; but, unfortunately, a good head does not fall to every one's share. As I was observing to the lovely marchioness just now, 'Our young *protégé*, madam, is' — and he touched his own forehead with emphasis — "'a little in *alt*, or so!' But we shall form you, Monsieur Valazy, — we shall form you. Even madame la marquise expressed her perfect satisfaction when she understood how implicitly you pin your reliance on my guidance."

Perceiving that any attempt to undeceive a man thus guarded round with self-sufficiency would be labour lost, Camille attempted some formally polite inquiries concerning Euphrosine; but on this topic Delplanque appeared, if possible, more vexatious and tormenting than before. He persisted in giving the most gallant motive to every trivial compliment uttered by the wealthy young merchant of Lyons. He chose to assign a secret signification to every word; replied with a short laugh of most provoking implication; reminded Camille that he had been young

himself ; and finally gave him to understand, he had introduced the episode of his imputed admiration of the fair Euphroisine into his round unvarnished tale to the St. Florentin family.

Either the surpassing irritation of being “sprighted with a fool,” tended to kindle into a deeper glow the fever already burning in the veins of Valazy, or the current of the old man’s absurdity had exhausted itself ; for Delplanque became suddenly struck by the change which a few short days had wrought in the appearance of Camille. He insisted on feeling his hand—his pulse ; pronounced him to be in a raging fever ; and having resolved on summoning to their council a coadjutor less offensive to the sufferer than the *prévôt des marchands*, in the guise of a skilful family physician, found himself compelled to yield to their importunities, and enter his bed instead of a travelling carriage. A cold caught on his journey and neglected during the press of business, the intense excitement of his cousin’s detested orgies, and more than all, immersion in the night dew after the enervating atmosphere of the court-theatre, had united to produce a violent fever. In the course of the night, Camille became delirious ; and on the second day, his life was despaired of !

Delplanque, with officious zeal, judged it expedient to call at the Hôtel St. Florentin, and acquaint the marquis with his imminent danger ; when Emiline immediately despatched an express to Grand Moulin, to apprise the good Madelon of the situation of her son ; and on the fifth night of Camille’s overwhelming attack, his mother was watching by his bedside. For days, for weeks, he lingered on the verge of the grave ; raving of past recollections and chimeras for the future ; and lavishing on many a careless ear those hallowed secrets which he had thought to yield but with his life.

At length the force of youth unimpaired by excess, and the vigilance of careful tending, restored him to consciousness, to motion, to strength ; and soon, the only symptom remaining of his severe illness, was a sobered demeanour, and still more subdued mood of mind. He learnt with gratitude, and *gratitude alone*, that the St. Florentins had

been unceasing in their attentions to Madelon and to himself throughout the period of his sufferings.

"It is well, mother!" replied Camille; "Time will probably afford me an occasion to mark my sense of their kindness."

"But now that you have consented to return home with me, my dear son, and perfect your recovery in your natal air, you will at least not leave Paris, without acknowledging, by a parting visit to the marchioness, that you are grateful for her interest in your sufferings?"

"No, mother! no;—*they* are noble, *I* am base!—No relations can exist between us, but such as are embarrassing to them, and humiliating to myself. Let them be content with the consciousness that they have conferred an obligation."

On arriving, however, at Grand Moulin, this ferocious spirit of independence subsided into a milder feeling, when he perceived the affectionate care with which Madame de St. Florentin had laboured to surround the guardian of her childhood with those flattering luxuries, rendered necessities to Madelon by long domestication among the rich and noble. Without ostentation, the most considerate tenderness seemed to have suggested every arrangement for her personal comfort; and Camille watched over his mother as she dozed in her easy chair, without wondering that she should dream of madame la marquise, as of a superior being.

But it was not *as* madame la marquise that Madelon either thought or dreamed of her foster-child. However her *speech* might define the lady of St. Florentin, to her *heart* she was still "*Emiline*," as truly and tenderly as in the days when wont to guide her little footsteps among the parterres of the Château de Navelles.—She was *Emiline* in the prayers nightly offered to the Almighty for her welfare;—she was *Emiline* in that morning burst of joyful thankfulness, with which she went forth to enjoy her benefits, and sun herself in the light of heaven. Madelon, the daughter and widow of a vassal of the Duc de Navelles, pretended neither to gentle birth nor gentle breeding. But she was wholly uncontaminated by vulgarity of mind.

She spoke, it is true, the dialect of her native village ;— but it served to express the sentiments of an honest and generous heart. She saw no further into things that met the eye or ear,— but she saw them undistorted by malicious interpretation. She had loved the infant Emiline more as a daughter of her hereditary lord, than as a charge capable of insuring her future fortunes ; and she loved the marchioness, as her nursling — her own — her *fille-de-lait* — her child in all but blood ! — Even Camille her only son, claimed not so close an adoption in her heart ; for strange to tell, she felt *his* superiority over herself, with a more marked consciousness than that of the Marchioness de St. Florentin. *His* honours were all acquired. She had seen his ascent towards his present height of prosperity ; while Emiline's dignity of station appeared in Madelon's eyes a part of her original self. But though embarrassed by the sense of her son's superiority, she dearly loved him ; was proud of his talents and his virtues ; and, moreover, peculiarly tenacious not to humiliate him by the evidence of her former servitude, or give him reason to wish he had a finer lady or better scholar for his mother.

But Madelon's humility was not unmingled with pride. She would have scorned to assume the appearance of a condition to which, of inherited right, she did not belong. Notwithstanding her opulent circumstances and the deference with which she was regarded among the tenantry of the duke, she retained her provincial costume as exactly as the poorest peasant of the village. The lace gathered round her wide-winged cap might be of finer texture, and the golden cross and ear-rings of more costly workmanship ; but instead of the flimsy, self-important Madame Valazy, which many would have sought to appear under similar pretensions, she chose to remain "*la bonne Madelon* ;" though perhaps a little tinged with a wealthy farmer's vanity in her linen-presses,— her walnut-wood furniture, — her twenty-five silver *converts*,— her yellow carnations, — and unrivalled dairy ! She boasted a breed of bantams, too which was the envy of the neighbourhood. But it was the only possession of which she *boasted*. She was never

known to allude to her son's acquired gentility, or her Emiline's faithful affection.

It was this very independence of spirit which rendered her so dear to Camille. — He felt himself ungifted with a similar superiority to vulgar opinion ; and to him this long-delayed visit to Grand Moulin was a source of equal triumph and humiliation. He had left the village a peasant — he returned to it a gentleman ; and rejoiced in the feebleness of health, which, retaining him within the limits of the farm, secured him from provoking that envy, hatred, and malice, which infallibly attend the elevation of a *parvenu*.

For five long years he had been imprisoned within the walls of a city ; — “ the pomp of groves and garniture of fields ” had long become unfamiliar to his eyes. Accustomed to the begrimed walls of Lyons, and the oppressiveness of a populated atmosphere, the fresh breeze of the wide woodlands, and the soft verdure of a bursting spring, excited within his heart a sense of enjoyment, painful from its very intensity. It was so long since he had offered the sacrifice of gratitude to the Creator upon his own mighty altar, that his heart throbbed with consciousness of its prolonged neglect ; and as he fixed his aching eyes on the sweep of wooded uplands, the silvery orchards and winding waters surrounding the farm, “ the peopled desert past ” subsided into its real insignificance in his estimation, and “ the fickle breath of popular applause ” became that empty echo which the ear of wisdom disavows. The unchangeable face of nature, shining with its eternal smile, and reminding him that while empires pass into oblivion and dynasties vanish from the world, the rolling river abideth, — the fountains of the great deep lose not a drop through the lapse of ages, — and the foundations of the hills stand “ so fast that they cannot be moved, ” — caused him to smile when he remembered the bootless vehemence of the factions of Paris !

But if Camille indulged at times in philosophical reflections, a more frequently-recurring consideration arose from the remembrance of Emiline, as connected with Navelles and its scenery. Nor, had he been so minded, could he have dismissed her from his thoughts ; for Madelon, in

every passing object and hour, found themes on which to ground her praises. He saw his mother's fair, round, good-humoured face break into smiles whenever she began to talk of her dearest child; and how could he ungraciously dismiss the subject? — In very truth, he could have listened for ever.

One day, after dragging his listless limbs round the garden of Grand Moulin, humouring his mother's pride in her early lettuces and listening to her predictions respecting the first opening of her rosebuds, — for they flourished in modest emulation side by side, — he paused for a moment to rest in the trimly arbour of hornbeam, which in his boyhood he had so often assisted to train, now overgrown by a matted mass of honeysuckles, through which the officious bees were pushing their peculations with a murmur of self-satisfaction. Madelon, following his feeble steps, seated herself for a moment by his side, to admire the busy activity of her hovering favourites, — for the reputation of her honeycomb vied with that of her dairy; — till allured by the propitious influence of the scene and hour, into the indulgence dearest to a Frenchwoman, — an undisturbed *causerie*, — she commenced a skirmish of gossipry, which her son readily anticipated would terminate in an important attack. From her very commencement of “*Ah! ça, mon ami! dis donc un peu,*” he foresaw that he should be required to *say* every thing which he most wished should remain unsaid.

After rallying him with village freedom upon his evident pre-occupation of mind, and attributing to his love of reverie the seclusion he had maintained since his arrival at Navelles, she suddenly exclaimed, “Well! she is in truth a sweet creature; and let them say what they will, I cannot wonder at the devotion of your attachment.”

All the blood in Camille's wasted frame rushed into his face at this strange avowal of his mother's participation in his mystery. “Can it be possible,” he faltered, “that you are mistress of the secret I have guarded so vigilantly?”

“*Oui dà!*” replied Madelon, half-laughing at his earnestness; “my last journey to Paris taught me many a

secret. Did I not watch by your pillow, child? — did I not listen to all your sighings, and murmurings, and ravings of her beauty, and of your tenderness, and a thousand such sing-song fancies? — To hear your protestations, Camille, no one on earth ever loved so fondly before.”

“ Would that such a persuasion were but the raving of my delirium ! I *do* love her, mother, as none ever loved before. *Who*, like me, has defied the power of time and absence? — who, like me, loved without even the wish to hope? ”

“ *Plait-il?* ” said Madelon. “ Without hope? — Why, what can a fine young fellow like my Camille have to fear? ”

“ Mother, you deceive yourself and me.”

“ *Nenni, nenni, mon fils!* I had scarcely found my way to your secret, child, before I discovered that this wonderful passion of yours was as warmly returned; — ay, and fifty-fold. She will not own it, Camille, but she loves the very ground you walk upon, and —— ”

“ False — did an angel speak it ! ” exclaimed Valazy, with indignant vehemence; and Madelon, who was gazing on his haggard countenance, became apprehensive that the consequences of his fever had affected his brain.

“ Nay,” she answered, in a deprecating tone, “ I tell you only what I heard myself from the marchioness’s sweet lips.”

“ Mother ! ” exclaimed Camille, his own tremulous with emotion, while unconsciously he grasped her arm; “ mother, have a care ! — one word more or less than the truth will indeed drive me to madness.”

“ My own dear son ! ” whispered Madelon soothingly, as she laid the fond pressure of a mother’s embrace upon his shoulder, “ am I wrong in revealing to you what my other child, my daughter Emiline, acknowledged to me? — Ay, Camille, — flout me as you will, — she told me the whole secret as we were watching together by your sick bed. She had been bending over you, and listening to your incoherent lamentations —— ”

“ How ! — explain yourself, mother ! — My senses seem wandering this morning ! — Or did I rightly understand

you, that Emiline de St. Florentin watched by *my* bed of sickness?"

"In truth, did she, — ay, Camille, hour after hour, and day after day, — although she bad me keep her condescension a secret from your ungracious self."

Valazy, whose mind was now excited beyond his control, rushed from the harbour, traversing with hasty but tottering steps the turfen paths of the garden; while Madelon relieved the oppression of her terror and concern by tears.

She was still stifling her sobs with her hands, when she felt them pressed by a cold touch; and looking up, perceived Camille again standing beside her. In those few moments of absence, an age of passion had rolled over his head. His lips were pale and quivering, his brow livid, his eyes dilated.

"Mother!" said he, in a tone intensely low, "I have heard from your mouth this day, what else no bribe, no threat had tempted me to believe. But *you* would not slander her; — you would not breathe one calumnious word against *her*! I would I had never heard it, — I would 'twere all unsaid, so I might calm the throbbing here," — he laid his hand heavily on his bosom, — "and think of her again as I have ever done. But no matter. You have touched the rock, and the stream that issues forth is a stream of lava. Is that your fault, mother, — or is it mine? — No matter. I am going back to Paris this night. Henceforth there is no breath on earth for me, but where *she* breathes."

Madelon, more and more convinced of the delirium of her son, gently attempted to dissuade him from his project. "Nay, nay, I will not hear of your going yet, Camille; your strength is unequal to the exertion. Can you not write to her father?"

"To *whom*?"

"To her father. As long-winded and tiresome and self-sufficient as he is, the marchioness assured me that he favoured your mutual passion."

"Mother, 'tis *you* who are raving now."

"To the good marquis, then. I am persuaded he would condescend on this occasion to become your advocate. After all, could the old gentleman do better for his daughter? —

For though Mademoiselle Euphrosine is fair and gentle, and well to do in the world, my Camille has a right to claim a bride as pretty as the best."

"Euphrosine?"

"The word must out at last, though you have chosen to keep the secret so long, and with such girlish coyness."

"Who said that Euphrosine loved me?" exclaimed Valazy, fiercely.

"My child,—our own dear Emiline."

"And *where*, mother,—when did she tell you so?"—

"By the side of your sick bed, Camille. We had been weeping together over your danger, and for many, many hours you had been raving of your tenderness for some beloved creature,—for *you* never *named* her. Even while protesting your attachment, my son, before all who were attending you, you still kept swearing that no power should ever rend the secret from your bosom. And when, in my perplexity, I turned to the marchioness for an explanation, she told me—you are not angry?"

"Speak out, while I have patience to listen."

"She said that the busy old gentleman, whose officious intrusions just then were so tormenting, came but as a messenger from his daughter, who loved you to distraction. She herself had seen you together, she said, at some public spectacle, where a jealous pique on Mademoiselle Euphrosine's account, drove you almost to phrenzy. Monsieur Delplanque judged it his duty to acquaint the marquis and herself, as your friends, with all the circumstances."

"Intolerable idiot!"

"But so little did the worthy man disapprove your attachment, and, according to my Emiline's account, so well was the degree and character of his daughter assorted to your own, that she was at a loss to conjecture what had suddenly driven you to such an extremity of despair."

"Despair?"

"Yes, repeatedly, during the paroxysms of your disorder, you spoke of having vainly striven to drive the sweet image from your heart——"

"And Emiline listened to the cries of my agony, yet knew so little to interpret my devotion to herself!"

"Pardon me, Camille, she confides as truly in your attachment as in my own," replied Madelon, as incapable of imagining the possibility of a profane passion for the pure Emiline, as for the holy Madonna.

"Mother, you do not guess the depth of my love for my foster-sister ——"

"I can — I can, my son!" exclaimed Madelon, kissing his forehead. "And oh! cherish that sacred affection, for it is the pride and comfort of your old mother's life. Indulge what whims you will in your fondness for Delplanque's daughter; but be your true and supreme attachment, to the sister who shared my cares for your childhood!"

Camille, unwilling to give her pain, made a signal of acquiescence, and withdrew from her presence. "Excellent woman!" murmured he, as he paced slowly homewards. "Her mind cannot imagine such monstrous disproportion as my love for the wedded child of a noble father!"

"Now Heaven have mercy on my son!" thought Madelon, as she also took her meditative way towards the farm. "Book-learning and the new whim-whams which the marchioness assures me are rife at Paris, — with Max Valazy, the ill-conditioned ruffian, — as the prophet of the tribe, — have turned his head! Ah! Camille — Camille! it was an evil day and evil chance that made thee a gentleman, if thy poor brains cannot bear thee up through thy elevation. God send thee sense! — thou hast no pride of body; — but if there be such a thing as pride of thought, *that pride* thou hast, my son, and sorely. I would I knew how his bewilderment would end," thought the good old woman, as she seated herself at her ebony wheel; and, to ease her perplexity or beguile her affliction, began to spin with as diligent an alacrity as one of the Destinies.

CHAPTER XI.

J'ai par dessus vous
 Ce plaisir si flatteur à ma tendresse extrême,
 De tenir tout du bienfaiteur que j'aime ;
 De voir que ses bontés font seules mes destins,—
 D'être l'ouvrage heureux de ses augustes mains.

Zaire.

DREADING that he might have wakened suspicions in his mother's honest heart, Camille Valazy seized the first letter he received from Lyons, as a pretext for his immediate return.

"I leave you happy here," said he, at parting,—and he gazed wistfully as he spoke, around the well-ordered arrangements of the thriving farm. "Your simple occupations, mother, and prosperous industry, satisfy your heart. The varying seasons bring you a change of cares and pleasures, which preserve you from *ennui* and——"

"*Ennui !*" said Madelon, turning her fresh healthy smile upon her son. "Those who rise with the sun, Camille, and labour till its setting, have no leisure for whimsies. I know not how 'tis—but I have ever a happy prospect before me. To-morrow, the first scythe is to be laid to my wheat—and saw you ever a likelier harvest?—Then scarcely will the songs of my husbandmen's *fête* be silenced, when—quick—the vintage! every hand to the vintage; and saw you ever a fairer crop than in the home vineyard, and on the *côte*? Then, long, long before the wine-press has done its work, comes my real *fête*—the dear happy crowning moment of my year.—Guess what it is, Camille!"

"Forgive me, mother, if my country knowledge have somewhat escaped my memory. I can recollect no further autumnal pleasure of the fields;—unless, like our neighbour Madame du Brac, you have a fancy to commemorate the festival of St. Hubert, by riding home from the forest with a couple of wolves at your saddle-bow."

"And so rob poor Caval, the ranger, of his forest fee?" said Madelon, her short laugh ringing joyously at the idea. "No, no! guess again!—You cannot? Ah! you

are such a stranger at Grand Moulin, that you know not half its pleasures! — Learn, then, that one calm soft evening, at the close of the vintage, just when all is still — still — in the twilight, except the whistle of the shepherds folding their flocks, I shall hear a distant roll of wheels, and then a long shout, and a burst of warm acclamations in the village; and then a hundred neighbours will come bustling in with the one same word on their lips, ‘Our good master is come! the gracious marchioness is come!’ — And then, I shall not close my eyes for blessing myself that night; and in the morning, long before the dew is off, a gentle tap, and ‘*Bon jour, chère bonne! — comment ça va?*’ — and then a sweet kiss, — and the little ones creeping in with their ‘*Bon jour, mère Madelon,*’ and ‘Is not Emiline grown? — look at Aglaé’s curls!’ — Or perhaps, ‘And what news from Lyons, dear good nurse?’ — Oh! ’tis such a happy moment!” said Madelon, with the tears rolling down her cheeks at the thought.

“And then the round of the farm! — Madame la marquise must needs visit the barn-yard, to see the game-bantams; and the young ladies must have a look at the hives, and taste the new honey-comb; and then — and then, — I find when the little fairies are gone, all my flax entangled on the reel, — and, ’tis such pleasure to set it right again! — But forgive me, my son! I speak of pleasure, and you are about to leave me.”

“Our parting should always be cheerful, mother! Since destiny decrees us to live apart, let me rejoice that you have friends who supply my place, and to whom your happiness is precious as to myself. But should any future change decrease that flattering interest, or the activity of a farmer’s life become too much for your declining years, you must come home to your Camille, and accept from him only, the tenderness and respect which you have so much right to command in his heart. God bless you, mother!” said Valazy, with that filial salute from which no age exempts the affectionate children of French parents.

“And you, my brave son!” said Madelon, laying her hand upon his head. Then, with tearful eyes, she followed

his departing footsteps from the village, the jealous comments of which he cared not to provoke by the sight of his travelling carriage.

"There he goes — good, and true, and handsome as a prince! As madame herself observed, it would be a sin indeed if he should ever become infected by the thoughts and ways of his cousin Max. — Well — well! let him marry Mademoiselle Euphrosine. Her pretty modest smile and rich dowry are not to be despised; and he will then have other thoughts to occupy his brains, than trouble himself concerning what advisers our good lord the king shall take to his councils, — or what ladies her gracious majesty shall gather round her court. What are court or council to him or me, or our like? — *Ah! 'la mère Madelon — la mère Madelon!' tout à l'heure mes amis! — tout à l'heure, ma fi.* See if I can steal half an hour for my own indulgence without being called here, and wanted there! *Allons, allons, — la boutique avant tout.*"

Once more engaged in the important concerns of his manufactory, the mind of Camille Valazy regained its former tone of moderation and tranquillity. An enormous capital, and the well-being of his patrons, was confided to his prudence and industry; and what afforded a still more engrossing interest to his heart, the existence of five hundred workmen, with their families, was dependent on his success. The domestic legislation of this little state offered continual calls on his time and feelings; for there is scarcely a condition of life which comprehends such varieties of excitement, as that which brings an individual into contact with a large portion of humble fellow-creatures whose prosperity hangs upon his single will. The interest entertained by a sovereign for the provinces of his kingdom is far less intimate and intense than that of the manufacturer to whom thousands look with reliance for their daily bread.

In the Lyonese society which Camille frequented, the state of public affairs now excited the warmest interest; but it was discussed with a qualified view to the emancipation of the *tiers état*, in which he wholly sympathised. The wealthy merchants of Lyons were naturally at-

tached to the maintenance of that class of the aristocracy whose luxury was the foundation of their fortunes. They were attached also to the *abstract* idea of their hereditary sovereign. They loved the *name* of Bourbon. But they were royalists, with a determination to enforce a more liberal constitution. "We adopt in our machinery," said they, "every improvement suggested by the discoveries of modern science. — Be the loom of the state as wisely and peaceably reformed. Its wheels will spin the easier, and their increased velocity produce a more even texture, — a more polished surface."

Under these expectations, the assembling of the states-general of the kingdom shortly after Valazy's return from Paris, was regarded as a first constitutional blow struck against the abuses of a corrupt government; and was hailed as such with universal gratulation. The taking of the Bastille, however, — the second incident of the awful drama, and the first *popular* movement, — was attended by acts of outrage, which induced Camille to revert with alarm to the predictions of Maximilien and his associates; while the insurrection which followed, connected with the events of the 5th and 6th of September, sufficiently justified his anxiety.

It is needless to follow, with close accuracy, the march of public events which, from that period till the summer of 1791, — the epoch of our story's commencement, — wore an appearance fatal to the hopes of the royalists of France, and terrific to the court. Neither is it requisite to revert to the equally familiar, and far more interesting picture of the sufferings of the royal family; who, from the period of their compulsory removal to the palace of the Tuileries, to their attempted escape from the polluted home of their ancestors, endured a bondage which must be considered one of the gloomiest and severest pages offered to the schooling of princes. But there were individual destinies connected with these calamities, which, if less generally known, are scarcely less deserving interest.

The Marquis and Marchioness de St. Florentin, although forming no part of the royal household nor pro-

voking through undue favouritism the evil will of the populace, had not so wholly escaped its censures as their kinsman the Chevalier de Mirepoix thought proper to assert for the re-assurance of his lovely cousin. Maximilien Valazy, who had his own views in augmenting their unpopularity, had taken care that their names should be defiled by frequent introduction into the pages of his friend, the infamous Hébert. He had no direct accusal with which to brand their innocence; but to associate the unoffending with the guilty, even by a disjunctive conjunction, — to bring them perpetually upon the stage of shame, even without involving them in the action of the piece, — is one of those arts of faction, by which the brightest character, though “pure as the snow that hangs on Dian’s temple,” may become “begrimed and black.”

The king and queen, forewarned by many disastrous signs and omens of the perils which were about to extend from their persons to those of their adherents, had persuaded many of their nearest and dearest to seek safety in emigration; and had even addressed their gracious commands to the veteran Duc de Navelles and the St. Florentin family, to quit their native country during the prevalence of civil anarchy.

We will spare our readers the verbose reply of the stanch old man. His sentiments, though involved in a flimsy web of diffuse eloquence, were worthy the nobleness of his loyal name. The honourable resolution set forth at the same time by his son-in-law, the Marquis de St. Florentin, has already placed its melancholy consequences before our eyes. Meanwhile their secret but unrelaxing enemy, the Jacobin Maximilien, failed not to improve the advantages afforded him by their steady adherence to the unpopular cause. Secure through the increasing ascendancy of his faction from the enmity of the lord of Navelles, he boldly revisited his birthplace and openly harangued the people; and though he ventured not to proceed to any extremity of violence, the firebrand carried by the human fox into the wide fields of the duke’s demesne bequeathed sparks in its progress, which smouldered for a time to burst into

a desolating conflagration. Those who marked the sullen progress of the flames dared not lay an assuaging hand on their violence ; nay, even those who beheld their possessions thus ravaged before their eyes, were compelled to join in the triumphant pæans of the incendiary. Alas ! already they anticipated a darker hour, and more extended ruin !

CHAPTER XII.

We have seen the best of our time ; machinations, hollowess, treachery, and all rumous disorders, follow us disquietly to our graves ! Find out this villain ; — it shall lose thee nothing ; — do it carefully. — *King Lear*

WHILE the adherents of the house of Bourbon were thus involved in danger and dismay, Camille Valazy did not fail to follow with a vigilant and sympathising eye the deepening complexion of their destinies. He knew the woman he adored to be surrounded by perils of the most serious character ; he saw her name inserted in the calumnious pages of the *Père Duchesne*, and *Publiciste Parisien* ; and was aware that many who had been brought forward in a similar manner, had been already sacrificed to the blind vengeance of the people. Emiline was in danger. — The companion of his infancy — the adored foster-child of his mother — was menaced by unprecedented trials ; and having satisfied himself that in so sacred a character she had a claim to every sacrifice in his power, Valazy was not long in forming a determination to resign his views, his interests, his feelings, his principles, his very life, to her service. Such was the vow he had offered to his mother in her behalf ; — such the oath which again, and fervently, he pledged to his own heart.

Fortunately for his intentions, it chanced that the course of commercial business suffered a material check from the disorganisation which now began to pervade every branch of public affairs ; and Valazy found no great difficulty in exciting the alarms of his partner respecting the critical position of their interests. He persuaded him, and not

without justification, that the time was come for every prudent man to hold his capital at his immediate disposal ; and that their wisest measure would be to realise their property, at a considerable loss, rather than leave it to be involved in the general wreck which the future, and at no great distance of time, must inevitably decree to the commercial interests of France ; and old Dacquin more inclined to bewail himself and his manufactory, than his native country, or her failing credit, stormed, expostulated, swore, wept, threatened, — and ended by assenting to the views and proposals of his partner. The liberality exercised by Camille readily procured them purchasers desirous of competing for a business at present thriving with undiminished success. In less than a month, a bright succession of newly burnished golden letters superseded those of the firm of “Dacquin and Valazy ;” while the *ci-devant* manufacturers became capitalists and gentlemen at large.

Amid the confusion arising from these important arrangements, Camille’s anxiety of mind was aggravated by the receipt of a letter from Laporte, the steward of the Duc de Navelles, acquainting him with the factious violence which had manifested itself among the peasantry of the estate submitted to his control ; — the unhappy spirit of resistance to all constituted authority excited by the visit of his kinsman Maximilien ; — and the belief entertained by the family of his noble patron, that Grand Moulin was no longer a safe or satisfactory residence for one so notoriously attached to their rights and interests, as his mother. He stated that, though Madelon had been treated by her nephew with scrupulous regard and deference, it had been evidently a main object of the Jacobin’s inflammatory harangues to render his ejection from the farm tenanted by his fathers, an evidence of the most oppressive tyranny ; and that in consequence of the influence commanded by his cunning eloquence, the good *fermière* of Grand Moulin began to find herself, for the first time, an object of jealousy and mistrust. All remembrance of her kindness, her neighbourly friendship, her frank cordiality, had been obliterated in a moment by the plausibility of an orator, who contrived to connect his imaginary wrongs with the grievances of that popular

cause which he insidiously affected to advocate ; and Madelon, deeply wounded by the desertion of her familiar friends, and the jealous sarcasms of envious neighbours, and above all, irritated past patience by the disaffection now openly acknowledge towards the hereditary lord of the land, at length acceded to the earnest entreaties of her noble foster-child, and resigned the lease of Grand Moulin, home-vineyard, bantams, yellow carnations, and all ! She had not, however, at present complied with the supplementary request of the considerate Emiline, that she would re-establish herself in her household. "Come !" she had written, "come and resume your rights upon my grateful affection. I call you, my best and kindest Madelon, to an anxious home, and a troubled city ; but we will weep together over the calamities of France ; and teach my children what holy charities can bind together the lord and the vassal, whom the policy of our evil times is seeking to disunite."

It was in furtherance of Madame de St. Florentin's project for the removal of Madelon to Paris, that Laporte requested the intervention of her son. In the mean time, her own views and inclinations were set forth in the following epistle, — being the third which his worthy parent had laboured to indite in his behalf, during the twenty-six years of his existence.

"My Son !

"I am going to quit Grand Moulin ! — So much the worse, Camille ! for you passed a happy childhood there, and I hoped that a tranquil old age would still find me settled at the farm. 'Tis a good air, that blows from the *côte*. The vines seldom failed. The crops are the earliest in the lordship ; and the *basse cour*, now it is paved and rebuilt, has not its equal in the province. The happiest days of my life were passed there, Camille ; and your father died there, and your good uncle. But, *n'importe !* as I said at first, I am going to leave Grand Moulin.

"And now, child, what shall become of your old mother ? My good Emiline would have me live with her at Paris. But many causes forbid me to accept her generous offer. I am told by eye-witnesses to the dangers by which she is

surrounded, that for her life's sake she may not long abide in France, that she must emigrate ; — *emigrate* ? ay, that is the word which designates the flight of the queen's friends. And supposing I should agree to encumber her journey with my helplessness, is it for *me* to leave France, leaving all who are dearest to us in the hands of their enemies, — for *me*, who have a son I love, and who is an honour to his father's name ?

" You are a gentleman now, my Camille ; not of man's making, but of the Almighty's and your own. The station in which you were born was beneath your abilities and goodness, though it was a match for mine ; and Madelon knows better than to resume a post which, ranking her with hired servants, would seem to bring you back to the condition above which your exertions have raised you. Were I alone in the world, I would toil till my last hour for my master's house ; work for my foster-child — beg for her ; but I have no right to degrade my excellent son in the person of his mother. Say then, Camille, what shall become of me ?

" Means I want not. Frugality, and Heaven's favour have blessed my store with increase. But these are fearful times. The bread we eat cannot be called our own ; and the strong arm of defence can scarcely keep its head. With you, my rest would be without fear, my food without bitterness. But how may this be ? Will Mademoiselle Euphrosine, whose speech is so dainty and her fashioning so gay, bear with Madelon's kersey bodice and village phrase ? — Will Camille himself endure to see me disgrace his board ? — My son ! it is for *you* to decide !"

These communications served but to determine and hasten the execution of a project, with which Camille had from the first connected his retirement from mercantile life. An estate of some extent had been offered to him as an investiture for part of his floating capital ; which, as its vicinity to the coast of the Pas de Calais afforded facilities becoming daily more important to the obnoxious party, he resolved to make his own. It was situated in a part of the country divided among small proprietors ; and consequently

"Another courier was selected for the service of the day. But I overheard the queen whispering to Madame de St. Florentin when they parted, 'You must find me this Camille of yours: I am more than inclined to trust to your recommendation. I am persuaded that the services of my Emiline's foster-brother would not be withheld from his queen in the time of trouble. Sound his views and principles, and if you discover them to be such as we could wish, let me hear more of him.'"

"And wherefore has not madame la marquise deigned to comply with her majesty's directions?"

"By her commands, I addressed a letter to you on that same day, imploring your presence at Paris. My letter, Monsieur Valazy, was returned unopened."

"I must have quitted Lyons previous to the honour of your communication."

"She has subsequently prosecuted her inquiries through another channel. Since the evil spirit of the times manifested itself on the estates of the Duc de Navelles, — his confidential steward, — Laporte, — has been received into the establishment of the marchioness. From him, the St. Florentine family learned that you had removed your mother from Grand Moulin, without yielding the smallest clue to your future residence or plans; which abrupt measure they naturally regard as an act of unkindness."

"It was urged by the most anxious regard for their safety."

"I leave you to exculpate yourself to the marchioness. This very morning, as I was leaving the château, she detained me to observe, 'I fear, mademoiselle, I was rash in the pledge I ventured to offer her majesty for the dutiful services of Camille Valazy. I can obtain no trace of my poor Madelon. Can *you*, Euphrosine, afford me no clue to her retreat?' I assured her, that since your last visit to Paris, I had scarcely even heard you named; but madame — I know not why — smiled incredulously as she patted me on the cheek. 'I will not despair,' she said. 'I still trust to recover my good brother through your agency.' Ah! how little, how very

little, when I entered this house on my return, did I expect so immediate a fulfilment of her expectations ! ”

“ Yet your manner of address evinced little pleasure in the recognition.”

“ Nay ! ” replied Euphrosine, smiling for the first time since their interview, “ recollect that I had no reason to share Madame de St. Florentin’s partial interpretation of your views and proceedings.”

“ I am grateful that you have amended your judgment. You have vouchsafed to give me your hand, mademoiselle, as the pledge of a loyal heart : — assure yourself that with mine, you have received my vows of homage and allegiance to the royal cause.”

The treaty thus cavalierly proposed, was scarcely ratified by the prompt acceptance of Euphrosine, when the re-entrance of old Delplanque, pinked and powdered, and re-installed in the *habit brun de financier*, put an end to all confidential discussion between the parties. With good-humoured chiding, he despatched his daughter to her toilet, preparatory to the announcement of dinner ; while a knowing smile affected to betray his participation in the state of affairs between her and his agitated guest.

The disordered attire and dishevelled tresses of Euphrosine manifested, on her return, how moderately she shared either the coquetry of her sex, or the designs of her father. Throughout the meal she remained silent, pre-occupied, and mournful ; and when, on her father’s proposing the health and restoration to happiness of Louis and his family, Camille accepted the pledge, and hallowed its meaning by a profound obeisance towards herself, the agitated girl was fairly driven from the table by the struggle of her emotions.

She re-appeared only to bid Camille farewell at the moment of departure. “ I will meet you to-morrow, at eleven,” she whispered, “ on the Boulevard de la Reine.” And her tone was so distinct from that of levity or sentiment, that even the vainest of men could not have misinterpreted the character of her communication.

“ This is indeed a season to mature the growth of heroism ! ” thought Camille, as he slowly returned towards

his lodgings ; “ nor can I wonder that women and girls assume the energy of manhood, when men acquire the qualities of beasts of prey. I will take, at least, no step till I have received further counsel from this devoted adherent to the falling cause of royalism ; or further insight into the views of those who are still dearer to my heart.”

The young provincial, in traversing the most frequented quarter of the metropolis, was astonished to perceive how little its external surface demonstrated the commotions secretly stirring within its dark recesses. Elegant equipages, smiling faces, rich repositories of art and fashion, announcements of public diversions, of mountebank feats, and theatrical representations, — still greeted him, as of old, in every crowded street. There was not a careful countenance or gloomy object to be detected in the city wherein projects of death and desolation were hourly devised and perpetrated ; and wherein the descendants of two ancient houses of royalty were condemned to the most grievous humiliations.

CHAPTER XVI.

*If they who on thy state attend,
Awe-struck before thy presence bend,
’Tis but the natural effect
Of grandeur that insures respect ;
But she is something more than queen,
Who is beloved where never seen.*

THE following morning, Valazy failed not to keep time and place in his appointment with Euphrosine ; and scarcely had he begun to thread the jostling groups of the crowded Boulevard, when he perceived her coming slowly towards him.

“ If the eyes of an enemy should be upon us,” observed Euphrosine, unhesitatingly accepting his arm, “ this meeting will be attributed to motives of gallantry — our best preservative against more important suspicions. And while I know your affections to be devoted, however sinfully, to

another, (pardon me, that I have penetrated your secret,) and my own to be exclusively engrossed by those whose sorrows form the disgrace of my native land, no inconvenience can accrue to either from such a misconstruction. What are name and fame, when balanced against a sense of duty? Banishing, therefore, every feeling of embarrassment arising from our sex and age, I hail you henceforward as the brother of my hopes."

There were many things in this speech which jarred against the prejudices and self-love of Camille. He was inclined to resent the peremptory decision of tone with which his young companion alluded to that secret of his heart; and felt piqued at the air of superiority with which she assigned the boundaries of their relative position. There was something, however, so mournfully grave, so free from all petulance in her manner, that an avowal of displeasure would have rendered him ridiculous.

"I accept," said he, after a short pause, "the trust you are willing to repose in me. You do me honour in believing, on such slight grounds, that my views and feelings are honest as your own. You do me honour by your confidence; — and may God desert me when I fail to deserve it!"

Camille fancied that the steps of his companion trod with a lighter buoyancy as he uttered these words; and as she had now insensibly directed their course towards the outskirts of the throng, he was about to profit by this moment of seclusion and enter into a detail of the projects that had brought him to Paris, when Euphrosine, apparently unconscious of his intention, resumed her former tone of dictation.

"The dove, Monsieur Valazy, need not disdain to gather wisdom from the serpent. To escape the snare and the pitfall, craft must match with craft, and the movements of our warfare keep pace and quality with those of the enemy."

"You speak in the terms of an able tactitian."

"Rather in humble scholarship to those who, from the importance of their stake, acquainted themselves with every

turn of the game. But I came not hither to dissert, — but to acquaint you with your appointed duty.”

“Leaving, I conclude, to myself,” interrupted Camille with some degree of irritation, “the liberty of action.”

“That you have already remitted, in your vow of allegiance to your queen.

“I was hardly conscious ——”

“Listen to the detail of duty which I have been instructed to impose upon you. My father, I find, acquainted you yesterday with the advantages derived by your cousin and his party from the confidential post allotted to one of their creatures, — an unfortunate girl named Flavie, — in the family of the Marquis de St. Florentin. ‘Better a friend in the enemy’s camp,’ says the proverb, ‘than two at home.’”

“I surely miscomprehend you,” exclaimed Camille, raising his voice to a pitch of indiscreet indignation. “I surely mistake your intention, in believing that you would assign to me the part of a spy — of an eaves-dropping traitor ——”

“I am simply instructed to request, that you will cause yourself to be enrolled in the National Guard. Your cousin’s recognisance will obtain you the notice of La Fayette; and by attaining the right of occasional access to the palace, you will supply a medium of unsuspected communication between their majesties and those friends whose safety might be compromised by overt intercourse.”

“Unconscious as I am, at present, of the duties undertaken and the oaths required in the act of enrolment, it is impossible to comply with your somewhat imperious request. My own views entirely coincide with the measure you propose; but I have yet to learn whether a soldier of the National Guard can honourably become an emissary of ——”

“His anointed king? — You must understand that fatal watchword *La Nation* rather in its factious than in its reasonable sense, if you suppose its authority can supersede that of its lawful sovereign! — Your scruple, however, is an honourable weakness, though one which better reflection cannot fail to disarm.”

"Heaven mend the times!" thought Camille, as he walked on for some minutes in silent perplexity; "for some demon, weary of organising the cabals of his Pandemonium, has infected every spirit in Paris with this mania for ascendancy and intrigue! — Yesterday, Maximilien talked to me as though his foot were already upon the neck of his king. To-day, a girl, — a mercer's daughter, — a child in experience of the world, — assumes the tone of a chancellor, — a minister of state, — a regal ambassador, — affecting to regulate *my* conscience and her majesty's councils! — Plague on the presumption of both!"

"I might perhaps startle you into inconsiderate acquiescence," resumed Euphrosine in a tranquil tone, "by claiming it through the influence and in the name of the Marchioness de St. Florentin; but I should scorn to win through the ascendancy of a lawless and unsanctioned passion, those concessions which you withhold from a wife and mother of the royal House of Bourbon, — most injured and most unhappy!"

"I withhold nothing," exclaimed Camille, "except the blind sacrifice of my right of option. I have sworn my allegiance to the royal cause — to myself — to God! — I now repeat it to *you*, praying you to become the interpreter of my good intentions in the quarter whence they have been commanded."

"The Marchioness de St. Florentin is at present occupied in conducting the infirm duke her father, from his estate at Navelles to a château possessed by the marquis in the vicinity of Meaux; and it is her intention to prolong her visit to the utmost. A circumstance, however, of the greatest moment — one which at present I have no commands to intrust to your knowledge — will shortly require the presence of madame la marquise at Paris; when you will have an opportunity of framing your own vindication, and receiving your credential, from herself."

Camille fancied that his companion was trying to obtain a view of his countenance while she vouchsafed this explanation; and, determined to mark his indifference, turned calmly towards her, thereby acquiring the further certitude that a tinge of scorn tempered the expression of her curiosity.

"I shall have the honour, then, of being admitted to an interview with my mother's honoured charge!" — he observed, attempting to characterise the nature of his devotion to Emiline.

A smile of deeper disdain evinced Euphrosine's detection of the subterfuge. "In the mean time," she replied, with marked emphasis, "since you have so lofty a superiority to dissembling even in a good cause, suffer me to forewarn you that you will find at the Hôtel St. Florentin a subtle and observant enemy."

"Your allusion to Mademoiselle Flavie authorises me to inquire wherefore you have permitted a woman, of whom you speak with veneration and regard, to retain in her service a being so degraded as the paramour of Maximilien Valazy?"

"Madame de St. Florentin is well aware of the character of her attendant. But it would be madness to draw down the malicious vengeance of an infuriated Jacobin, by the dismissal of his envoy. Besides, material advantages have been obtained at the château, by putting the spy on a wrong scent. We trust to your address to escape a similar snare, when you do us the service of obtaining secret information from your kinsman."

"Again you misinterpret my intentions, or would affix a false limit to the duties I have undertaken," cried Camille. "No consideration would induce me to provoke a confidence of which I premeditated the betrayal; nor should I endure the thought of a pretended adoption of the views of the patriotic faction, were it not the only available means of benefiting ——" he hesitated.

"Speak out, sir! You have nothing to fear from my comments or misconstruction — of benefiting, you would say, the Marquise de St. Florentin. Make what compromise you can between your devotion to her interests, — those of the throne and the altar of your native country, — and your own peevish code of honour. For me," she added emphatically, "I have but one law, — one principle, — one duty; — an unlimited devotion to my God, my country, and my old father."

Camille looked earnestly into Euphrosine's countenance

as she uttered these words ; and was almost startled to find there the same feminine delicacy of feature and dove-like gentleness it had worn at the period when he regarded it as the index of a trifling and feeble mind. Mademoiselle Delplanque had something peculiarly girlish in her air and figure ; a fragility amounting to insignificance. Yet under the admonition of those youthful and uncharactered lips the spirit of Valazy sank rebuked.

“ I read your thoughts,” she resumed. — “ You marvel at my boldness ; at the recklessness of public opinion which has engaged me in a furtive interview with a comparative stranger, — and above all, which has taught me to dispense with the authority of my father.”

Camille discerned the tremulous motion of the arm which rested upon his own.

“ Yet am I neither overbold, nor indifferent to the suffrage of the world. An era of general disorder has begun. But that the fickle parasites of Versailles look rather to the *seeming* than to the *truth* of things, Marie Antoinette of France had not needed the reluctant services which I, the lowliest of her partisans, am come to crave of you in her name.”

She paused in evident emotion ; and just as Camille was about to make an elaborate declaration of his confidence in the purity of her motives, detached himself abruptly from his side, and turning into an adjoining street, was out of sight in a moment.

“ Am I awake ? ” thought Valazy, as he pursued his solitary way. “ Am I in my right senses, or is she ? — Delplanque’s daughter become the delegate of a crowned head ? — The queen — Emiline — consorting with a simple tradesman’s daughter ! ”

The remembrance of his frequent advocacy of the equality of human rights and virtues suddenly jarred upon his mind ; and consciousness of the superiority of the being with whom he had been conversing reproved his apostasy. He confessed to himself, meanwhile, that to become the faithful emissary of Madame de St. Florentin, the chosen brother of Euphrosine, were distinctions not unpromising for his future happiness.

CHAPTER XVII.

Servi slam si, — ma servi ognor frementi.

ALFIERI.

IT was at this juncture that the difficulties, humiliations, and cruelties, inflicted on the royal family, hastened the end anticipated by their persecutors ; — by rendering their projects desperate, and inciting them to a movement sufficiently unpopular to warrant unqualified imprisonment. The unfortunate Louis granted his tardy sanction to the scheme concocted between his anxious family and the Marquis de Bouillé, and attempted to secure their general safety by seeking refuge in a strong outpost on the frontier of his agitated kingdom.

The Marquis de St. Florentin, who, at the request of the queen, had charged himself with the cipher transmitting the pre-arrangement of the plan to Bouillé, who, as governor of Metz and Alsace, might be considered viceroy over the north-eastern frontier, vainly represented to the king that his sole chance of reaching Montmédy, the appointed fortress, was by the route of Flanders.

“ I know,” replied his majesty, “ to what misinterpretation my conduct is subjected ; and it shall never be said that I abandoned my kingdom through tenderness for my personal safety. — I will set my foot on no other soil than that of France.”* And thus the same timid apprehension of wounding the prejudices of a nation whose every hand and every voice was active against his peace, became anew, and for the last time, a sunken rock, to wreck the frail vessel, which might perhaps have still weathered the storm of revolutionary excitement.

The passport procured by St. Florentin with the greatest difficulty and address, was consequently given up to Monsieur, who was sufficiently fortunate to reach the frontier without molestation, while the marquis, dispirited by a change of plan so fatal to his hopes, applied himself to the difficult task of seeking a new passport, to conduct the royal

* Historical.

party by the Châlons road. Once more successful in the attempt, it was agreed that he should accompany the fugitives as far as the post from which Bouillé, without exciting suspicion, might secure their further progress by the convoy of a detachment of the troops under his command.

A cipher of assent to this new scheme of co-operation had been received from the Marquis de Bouillé — the strictest secrecy had been observed. The very household of the queen remained unsuspecting of her intentions. For repeated betrayal had insinuated general mistrust into a mind originally candid to imprudence ; and the most sanguine hopes began to renovate those drooping hearts long steeped in the bitter tears of humiliation.

The queen, with prudent foresight, having appropriated to the use of her daughter a chamber belonging to a vacant suite of apartments whence an unsuspected door opened to the court-yard of the Tuileries, it was resolved that the royal party, including their majesties, Madame Elizabeth, the dauphin, and his sister, should singly escape through this obscure issue, at eleven o'clock at night — (an hour when they were especially free from household attendance) — and reach an appointed spot, where the travelling carriage assigned to their use, with St. Florentin and two gentlemen of the body-guard disguised as attendants, would be in waiting to receive them. So judiciously were these and other minor arrangements concerted, that had it not been for a lamentable postponement in the outset of the expedition, through which the troops stationed for their protection were compelled to desert their post previous to the arrival of the disguised fugitives, the ultimate safety of Louis XVI. and his unfortunate family would have been secured on this critical occasion.

With a view of aiding the progress of an undertaking requiring the stanchest fidelity in its agents, Madame de St. Florentin had intrusted to her enthusiastic *protégée* the delicate task of engaging the services of her foster-brother. But among the calamities endangering the success of every secret undertaking, at that epoch, was the general mistrust and *surveillance* which rendered communication among the parties concerned difficult on all occasions, and on some,

impossible. From the period when Euphrosine succeeded in attaching Camille to the party, the vigilance of the treacherous Flavie intercepted all means of intelligence between them; and on the morning of the fatal 21st of June, the arrival of a strange emissary on the part of Mademoiselle Bertin in place of Euphrosine, satisfied her that either treachery or some grievous misfortune had deprived her of her energetic and favourite assistant. But apprehension for the safety of those she loved — her husband and her sovereign — quickly obliterated all other considerations; and she soon forgot her suspicions.

Meanwhile, Camille obeyed, with diligence and exactness, his instructions. He had passed through the ordeal of Maximilien Valazy's suspicious scrutiny; who, nothing doubting that his kinsman entertained an ultimate and unacknowledged object for his sudden exertions, subjected him to a severe cross-examination in the course of his very first interview with La Fayette. The result, however, was favourable to himself; for the general, anxious to secure the voices of the more respectable citizens, and surround his person with active and able coadjutors, instantly distinguished the manly and intelligent spirit characterising the young aspirant for the honours of the civic guard. He promised, and speedily redeemed his word, to have an eye to his advancement.

Scarcely had Camille invested himself in the accoutrements of his new vocation, when he hastened to fulfil the expectations of those to whose aid its services were secretly dedicated, by presenting himself at the house of Delplanque. He did not, however, succeed in gaining access to the presence of Euphrosine; and his suspicions being awakened by the pertinacity with which, day after day, he was refused admittance, he had recourse to an universal method of insinuation, and by a *douceur* to the surly domestic Cerberus of the *ex-mercier*, obtained some insight into this ill-timed and perplexing mystery.

On the very day of his last interview with Mademoiselle Delplanque, she had been denounced to the National Assembly as a secret agent of Marie Antoinette; and as the period had not yet arrived when persons could be arrested

and imprisoned on such invalid suspicious, her effects were subjected, in the first instance, to the domiciliary inquisition of the municipal officers. Thanks to her own foresight and presence of mind, nothing was detected that could substantiate the charge ; and after a slight, but vexatious public examination, she was set at liberty.

To Euphrosine herself, this transitory trial appeared but a trifling sacrifice. She had been harassed and insulted ; but the remembrance of Marie Antoinette, and the humiliations to which *she* had been subjected, hushed every murmur upon her lips. Not so old Delplanque. *His* selfishness had enlisted itself in no party — acknowledged no influence, — he was unsusceptible of the least enthusiasm to smooth the path of martyrdom. The ensanguined ghosts of Réveillon, Berthier, and Foulon, arose in his memory, the moment a shouting populace cheered the entrance of the minions of the law into his dwelling. He had wit enough to perceive that the extreme loveliness of Euphrosine had attracted general attention towards his daughter and his ducats : — and had no mind to be despoiled of either in favour of some beggarly democrat, who affected to be “ wise,” and had “ never seen the Louvre.” Elated beyond his hopes by the speedy enlargement of Euphrosine, he resolved to secure the further safety of both by emigration, though not in its most extended sense.

A *budaud* of most contracted perceptions, the capital was his *patrie*, — the Marais his city of refuge from the commotions of the court ; and in deserting them for his native province, he became as very an emigrant as any Polignac or D’Artois of them all ! Within twenty-four hours of Euphrosine’s liberation, he was on the road to Arras, to place himself and his daughter under the protection of his brother, a flourishing merchant, whose influence was great in that city, “ whatsoever king might reign.” Vain the tears and entreaties of his agonised child, — Euphrosine was forced to repress her glowing loyalty, and stifle the sense of her importance to her royal mistress, in the dread that her father’s timid egotism might betray to utter perdition the royal cause. With a heart broken by grief and anxiety, she was fain to accompany the abdicated mercer to Arras ; where, he hoped, unknown and unsuspected,

to dream away the gloomy night which obscured the face of public affairs, and the brilliant prospects of the capital.

"And did Mademoiselle Delplanque leave no letter for me — no communication?" inquired Camille. "Did her father mention no commission for me to execute?"

"None!" replied the dull and uncommunicative domestic. "But now I think on't, mademoiselle requested you would take charge of a pot of carnations which stood in her chamber."

"And why did you not immediately forward it to me?"

"For what purpose? I have watered it daily; a poor sickly plant, without a single flower."

"Nevertheless I am bound to comply with the commands of mademoiselle, and charge myself with her commission."

"As you please, sir," said the sulky porter's wife. "But you may assure yourself that I have both leisure and zeal to look to Mam'selle Euphrosine's flowers."

Persuaded that some peculiarity was attached to the gift, Camille instantly conveyed it in a fiacre to his lodgings. Arrived in his own apartment, he hastily drew bolt and bar, and proceeded to the investigation of the mystery. The earth had evidently been recently disturbed. He hesitated not, therefore, to turn out the contents of the flower-pot; and his suspicions were justified by the discovery of a square iron casket under the mould, containing 30,000 francs in sealed and labelled bags of double *louis-d'ors*, accompanied by the following billet: —

"Probably your sagacity will put you in possession of the accompanying gold, which I hold in deposit for the service of others. Denied the valued privilege of prosecuting my exertions in their cause, leave me the consolation of believing that you will replace me in zeal and attachment. I have every reason to suppose that my accuser to the Assembly was the unworthy servant of one who is very dear to you; and that *you* also are honoured by her remembrance. Guard, therefore, as your life, the secret motives of a measure which I trust is by this time assured on your part. To say more, were to compromise your safety and my own. Farewell!"

CHAPTER XVIII.

"I possess the chief place over the citizens.

"Thy house is then upon sand, thy bed upon briars, thy seat on a hollow, shrinking away to give thee a fall. Thy king, if good, is the servant of the public,—thou the slave of the multitude; the day of his coronation he died for himself, and began to live for others,—ay, and for many unjust considerers of his pains. Yet, when he is gone, they will wish him back again."

PETRARCH.—*De Contemptu Mundi.*

THE sudden disappearance of Euphroisine from the scene of action deprived the disconcerted Camille of the polar-star by which he had hoped to steer his future movements. He knew that Madame de St. Florentin must still be ignorant of his submission to her commands; but though his professional initiation had so fully occupied his time and attention as to estrange his notice from the important events passing in the Delplanque family, it had not prevented him from making general inquiries relative to the marchioness, her views, and movements. He was aware that she still prolonged her visit to her father,—secure from insult and molestation in the midst of a tenantry to whom she was endeared beyond a Jacobin's misleading; and thus, free from all uneasiness on her account, Camille was content to fulfil the duties of the new calling he had adopted, and acquaint himself with the occasions that might render it conducive to her future safety.

From the hour of his enrolment in the ranks of the National Guard, he had the satisfaction of perceiving that he was considered by its commandant, La Fayette, with distinguishing favour; a circumstance which Maximilien Valazy failed not to attribute to his cousin's close kindred with an influential deputy and orator of the patriotic faction; and which Camille himself was rather inclined to trace to those insinuations of royalism, suggested by his cousin with a far different intention. *Le Blondinet*,—as La Fayette was familiarly nicknamed by the court of Versailles,—though professedly of the constitutional party, omitted no occasion of affording personal protection to the unfortunate monarch whom he was anxious to reduce to the mockery of a state-puppet, —or nominal head to the

most limited monarchy which triumphant rebellion ever yet shore of its beams. The king and queen were at that period a sacred pledge intrusted by the nation to the guardianship of its civic force; and La Fayette was at once responsible to the Assembly for the persons of his prisoners, and to his sovereign for security from the evil will of the infuriated multitude.

In the execution of this twofold trust, he had uniformly bid defiance to the innovations of the people, and resisted the arrogant pretensions of the Jacobin and Brissotin factions; to which, under the ultra-banner of the Montagnards, Maximilien Valazy affected to hold himself attached. Careful, however, to shun the perils investing a house divided against itself, La Fayette remained on terms of personal cordiality with the members of the party opposed to the throne and its ancient prerogative—the court of Versailles and its influence; while he welcomed, or rather courted to his ranks, all such substantial citizens as had personal motives for repressing the growth and innovations of civil anarchy,—and all such moderate constitutionalists as were willing to respect the fallen majesty which themselves had levelled with the dust. Notwithstanding the influence attributed to his word, it proved insufficient to re-establish the discipline of the troops under his command, when, on the occasion of the king's intended journey to St. Cloud, the National Guard united with the people, to forbid his departure; and though La Fayette was persuaded to resume the high military authority which at that crisis he had indignantly resigned, he neglected no opportunity to fortify the fidelity of his troops, and surround himself with men of tried integrity and loyal feeling.

The family connection between La Fayette and the Marquis de Bouillé induced many to believe that a secret understanding existed between them, relative to the projected flight of the royal family; that the former, awakened to the increasing ferocity of the mob, and the sanguinary views entertained by the leading members of the Assembly, had insisted upon the retention of his kinsman in his high command; certain that it would secure an eventual resource to the persecuted monarch and his family.

A few days previous to the night fixed for the escape of the royal family, Camille received an unsolicited appointment to the post of aide-de-camp to his general ; who, in overlooking the intermediary progression of rank in favour of one of the name of Valazy, was secure from provoking the displeasure of the Jacobins ; while the moderate party placed a blind reliance on the wisdom of his measures.

There exists probably no human distinction, of which the attainment is not an immediate source of pride and pleasure ; and even Camille, restricted as he was in the projects of his ambition and political views, did not regard with insensibility the notice of a man so remarkable as La Fayette.

“ Pray Heaven, I become not a partisan in right earnest,” said he, as he looked on his new epaulet. “ My heart is with the king, — my mind with his people. My right arm shall devote itself to maintain peace between them, while it guards from scathe the child of the noble benefactor of my youth. Welcome, however, will be the day that restores the country to tranquillity, even at the sacrifice of some portion of the rights it claims ; for the idol of liberty, which delights to find itself bathed in kindred blood, is unworthy the sacrifices that load its reeking altars.”

Such were the reflections which followed his instalment in his uncoveted honours. Further consideration taught him to regret his accession to a dignity, which might prove a fatal impediment to his exertions in the cause still dearer to his heart than that of king or country. In the course of the following day, as he was galloping with a despatch towards the Porte St. Denis, having encountered a carriage bearing the arms of St. Florentin and Navelles, he relaxed his speed to detect its entrance into the court-yard of the Hôtel St. Florentin, where the marquis was impatiently waiting the arrival of his beloved Emilie and her children.

Though deeply agitated by this momentary view of the object of his enthusiastic attachment, he was enabled to detect the grievous changes effected by anxiety in her appearance. He noticed the tremulous lip and wasted cheek, coloured with a momentary hectic as she approached the

beloved home no longer affording her a refuge from affliction, — the beloved husband, whose fond esteem no longer secured her from insult. But he knew not, nor could guess the exciting cause of her unusual emotion ! She was come to take her leave of the marquis, previous to the final effort of his devotion in the royal cause. — She was come to be a hostage in the enemy's camp ; — to take her first step in that public path of danger, which was hereafter to guide her through precincts of infamy, horror, and *death* !

During the remainder of the day, the mind of Camille was divided between his duties, and a consideration of the manner in which he could avoid the appearance of officiousness in presenting himself to Emiline's recognition. But he was spared all unnecessary debate on the subject. As he proceeded early on the morrow towards the Hôtel de Ville to render an account of his mission, he was met by an orderly, requiring his immediate attendance on General La Fayette. Camille hastened forwards ; and in the course of a few minutes, was summoned to the cabinet of the general, whom he found occupied in the attentive perusal of some official documents.

La Fayette looked up from his employment as Valazy entered, acknowledged his respectful salutation with a hasty nod, and resumed his work ; and Camille, while he waited the leisure of his patron, interested himself in contemplating the figure and attitude of the man, who at that moment — more than king or orator — balanced the destinies of France. A stream of morning light fell from the lofty window upon his stern soldier-like countenance ; his hair hung in unpowdered masses round his face ; even his military array had somewhat relaxed its punctilio of etiquette. But the person of the general had been too long stiffened by the harness of war, to forfeit an iota of its formal dignity ; and Camille could not divest himself of that feeling of awe with which we gaze on those who bear the impress of having grappled with danger face to face, and of wearing laurels not altogether bloodless. So deeply was he engaged in this interesting contemplation, that he started at the abrupt tone of General la Fayette's first inquiry.

“ You have some domestic relation with the family of St. Florentin. Explain to me, sir, its origin and interests.”

Valazy, who had not yet acquired the art of listening to that name unmoved, attempted to describe the nature of his connection with the house of Navelles; interpolating his hurried narrative with assurances that all intercourse between them had long ceased.

La Fayette, attributing this renegation of his former protectors to a motive far less honourable than that in which it really originated, sternly assured the young soldier that he did himself little credit by this vehement exculpation. “ Ingratitude,” said he, “ is a bad pioneer to advancement; and to deny his master was condemnation even to an apostle.”

Camille was not sufficiently trained to habits of subordination, to let this charge pass unvindicated. “ Could I accuse myself,” he began —

“ Silence !” exclaimed the general. “ I sent for you to receive my instructions, not to favour me with your own. Understand, therefore, that I am so little inclined to behold ties of family union disregarded, — so little desirous of inflicting punishment where expostulation may still avail, — that I could wish you ” (instinctively he lowered his peremptory voice, and glanced towards the door of the cabinet,) — “ I could wish you to wait upon St. Florentin in my name, — and warn him, — nay, *entreat* him, not to draw my attention too closely towards him *this day*. He will understand my meaning. Tell him, he may tempt my forbearance beyond my power of forgiveness; and beg him to believe, that the hazards he is about to incur are directed towards an unprofitable aim, — towards a hopeless — an *utterly* hopeless, conclusion.”

He paused, and Camille marked his comprehension of the command by a profound obeisance.

“ You will remember that my commission does not include itself among your military duties, — that it is, in short, confidential; and according to your diligence on the present occasion, will a good understanding be permanently established between us. Go, sir. Your time is at your

own disposal for the remainder of the day. Remember that I have said — *confidential*."

Camille again bowed, and following the command implied by the general's extended hand, quitted the cabinet without delay. Though understanding but imperfectly the implication contained in La Fayette's mysterious message, he perceived that it was one of considerable importance. Pausing only to throw off that uniform which so ill became the nuncio of a private and pacific mission, — he proceeded to the Hôtel St. Florentin.

CHAPTER XIX.

Tout est perdu pour toi, les tyrans sont vainqueurs,
Ton supplice est tout prêt ; si tu ne fuis, tu meurs,
Pars ! — ne perds points de tems ; prend ce soldat pour guide,
Trompons des meurtriers l'espérance homicide,
Tu vois mon désespoir. *Alzinc.*

BEFORE Camille presented himself to fulfil the charge of the Marquis de la Fayette, St. Florentin had already quitted his home — for ever !

Having received, through the agency of the faithful Bertin, the final appointment of Marie Antoinette, and taken the melancholy adieu already described, he determined to avoid all danger of interruption to his momentous project, by absenting himself from his family during the remainder of the day ; — devoting the morning to a reconnaissance of the obstacles he was likely to encounter on the route destined to be traversed at night by the royal fugitives ; — and dining at an obscure restaurateur's, in the remote quarter where he had hired the travelling carriage and horses for their use.

Camille, who received in answer to his inquiries for the Marquis de St. Florentin a simple assurance that he was absent from home, determined to loiter in the neighbourhood till his return to the hotel. But hour after hour passed away. The intense heat of the morning subsided into the cooler freshness of evening — the dimness of twilight, — and no St. Florentin ! The approach of night

distracted his mind with anxiety.—Was he too late?—Had that single hour of delay rendered his mission invalid?—“*This day!*” had been the period emphatically named by La Fayette, as offering some danger expressly to be avoided!

Bewildered by his conjectures, Camille no longer hesitated to apply for an audience of the marchioness herself. But the porter, having transmitted the request through the intervention of Mademoiselle Flavie, returned with a harsh negative to the petition. There was something in the phrasing of the message, which induced Camille to suspect, and with reason, that it was not framed by the gentle Emiline; and persuaded that through some mischievous influence, his prayer had been prevented from reaching her ear, he resolved to despatch a message to her in writing, and adjourned to a neighbouring coffee-house to effect his purpose. But the sight of the suspicious and disorderly beings congregated there recalled to mind the danger that might arise, were a billet intercepted sufficiently forcible in its expressions to awaken the alarms of the marchioness. He returned, therefore, in anxious haste towards the hotel; trusting that among its exits and its entrances he should encounter some faithful envoy.

Scarcely had he regained the court-yard,—for it was already night,—when a carriage drew up to the door; and Emiline, brilliant in jewels, and robed in all the glowing elegance of fashion,—attired, in short, for the *fête* of the Duc de Nivernois,—glanced for an instant before his eyes!

Camille shuddered as the carriage rolled away.—“*Deplorable levity!*” he exclaimed,—“*fatal vanity!*—Will neither the sufferings nor the perils of her country,—her sovereign,—her kindred,—her very self,—suffice to neutralise its fantastic folly!—Emiline, Emiline!—There is mockery in the glimmering of thy jewelled attire,—there is accusation in the lightness of thy step at such an hour!—Were I often permitted to see thee thus—the thralldom of my heart would quickly end.”

The Swiss was still standing, flambeau in hand, upon the steps; and Camille eagerly profited by so fortunate an opportunity for further interrogation. “*Was the Marquis de St. Florentin,*” he inquired, “*likely to meet his lady at*

the Hôtel Nivernois ? — the address he had heard given to the servants.

“ The marquis was gone into the country.”

“ When ? — where ? ” —

Instead of replying, the man hastily extinguished his flambeau, and retreated from the importunate questions of an obscure foot-passenger, whose visit had been cavalierly declined by the *femme de chambre de madame la marquise*.

Valazy was half inclined to attempt an interview with Emiline on her departure from the *fête* ; and, taking his way towards the Hôtel Nivernois, stationed himself amid the murmuring crowd surrounding the illuminated mansion whence the sound of music and festivity issued in frightful contrast. To escape the horrible execrations which met his ear on every side, — the menaces poured forth upon the heads of those who derided the starving populace by their intemperance in the hour of scarcity, Camille turned towards the Boulevards ; — a spot almost deserted at that hour of the night.

It was the noon-tide of the year, — the glowing luxuriance of June, — that month which not even the pollution of a city can wholly subdue. A clear grey summer night twinkling with a solitary star that seemed to shrink from finding itself alone on the heavens, had hushed the atmosphere into stillness. The hum of the city was over ; the artisan had gone to his feverish rest ; and Camille, as he paced the deserted Boulevard, marvelled that the fragrance bursting from its lime-trees and adjoining gardens had not power to attract the sickly mechanic from his squalid den, or the still more sickly votary of dissipation from the crowded chambers infested by noxious exhalations. When he thought of the scene of riot and folly whence he had just escaped, he felt inclined, for a moment, to revert to his early prejudices against the arrogant luxury of the aristocracy ; and to utter a general anathema against that wantonness of excess, which even the humiliation and grief of the sovereigns they affected to cherish were insufficient to moderate. He turned from the image of the radiant Emiline, to the recollection of the pale and saddened girl who hung on his arm when last he trod that

Boulevard ; — whose beauty was subdued and soft as the balmy night hovering over his head ; — and whose thoughts were as elevated, and whose mind as bright, as the one clear star that glanced amid its shadows.

Engrossed by these meditations and reminiscences, Camille pursued his solitary way along the Boulevards ; till, in one of the most unfrequented quarters, he was struck by the appearance of a heavy travelling carriage with four horses, waiting as if in expectation of additional passengers. While inwardly commenting upon the loveliness of the season for a midnight journey, his steps were overtaken by two females, who passed onwards with hurried avoidance ; and by the light of a lamp which partially illuminated their faces, he noticed that they were meanly appressed, but that the countenance of the one nearest to himself, though tinged with a deathlike paleness, was exquisitely lovely. As they reached the carriage, the door opened ; — and it was evident that they were welcomed by those within with the fondest warmth of gratulation. In a minute, a voice required in the German language the coachman to proceed, and the equipage rolled rapidly along the Boulevard.

A sudden consciousness as quickly enlightened the mind of Camille, increasing as the rumble of its cumbrous wheels lessened in the distance. The hour, — the occasion, — the mysterious haste of the travellers, excited his first suspicion ; — and on reflection, the beautiful face on which he had gazed, bore the peculiar lineaments of the Bourbon countenance. — It was undoubtedly that of Madame Elizabeth, the only member of the royal family personally unknown to him ; and the coachman, of whose figure he had caught a momentary glimpse, was as surely St. Florentin himself ! — His respectful air as he turned towards the carriage, demonstrated that some person of supreme rank was lodged within. — Yes ! every circumstance tallied with La Fayette's oracular warning ; — every circumstance betrayed in the persons of these midnight fugitives — the royal family of France !

The truth was scarcely less manifest than the importance of the crisis ! Not a moment was to be lost. — Life and

death, — perhaps, the lives and deaths of thousands, — hung suspended on every dropping grain of sand ; — and Camille, fondly trusting that his speed might yet intercept the carriage at the Barrière, flew with eager and untiring zeal in the direction it had taken. In the impetuosity of his course, the earth seemed to recede beneath his steps. — He saw not, felt not, — his breath was restrained as by an iron girdle round his bosom. — A sense of agony urged on his bounding feet, and superseded even his doubts of success. There it was before him ! — that dark, and seemingly indifferent object, moving forward in the distance, — whose attainment would form a triumph for his future life, and perhaps a preservative for many an innocent victim ; — whose attainment might have been compassed by the delay of a moment, — by the intervention of a stone on the road ! — But its destiny was otherwise appointed ! —

At about forty paces from the Barrière St. Martin, Camille, dreading to attract the observation of the municipal officers stationed there, checked the violence of his speed. Aided by the flashing lamps of the office, he had the mortification of seeing the passport returned into the carriage by the soldier on duty ; and, before he could rush forwards, a hoarse exclamation of “ *En route !* ” and a furious incitement of the whip put the stately vehicle again in motion, at a very different rate from its previous movements. Nor did Valazy attempt to follow its accelerated speed. The impossibility of overtaking the carriage was glaringly evident ; and he felt assured that the betrayal of undue solicitude, could not fail to attract the attention of the gendarmerie towards its contents.

With an air of indifference, therefore, he sauntered towards the guard-house ; where, under pretence of arranging his watch by the light of the lamp, he entered into conversation with the soldier who was smoking at the door ; — affecting to ridicule the cumbersome equipage, and heavy load of the recent travellers. “ But they were a squadron of German thickskulls ? ” he observed, in a half-interrogatory tone.

“ The Baroness de Korff and her family, returning to Germany. — Would we were as well rid of all other im-

portations from the wrong side of the Rhine, or that they were smothered in their own *sauer kraut* ! If my advice were to be taken, *morguienne*, the Austrian, and her gang should be crushed like so many toads ! ”

Valazy shuddered with horror, when he remembered that the safety of “the Austrian” had been placed but a few seconds before at this ruffian’s disposal ! Nor did it dispel his anxiety to remember by how many voices in the kingdom these sentiments, and others of similar atrocity, were unceasingly re-echoed. The king and queen had escaped the vigilance of their janitors ; but, without possessing the slightest suspicion of their ultimate destination, he felt persuaded that the warning insinuated by La Fayette had not been inadvertently given ; and that a path conducting through observant thousands of exasperated enemies must be fatal. Reflection came too late. The only measure of redress that occurred to his mind, was to hasten his purposed interview with Emiline, and withdraw one martyr from the general sacrifice.

As he retraced his steps along the Boulevard,—the deepening uproar of popular tumult became distinctly audible. A lurid reflection reddened the atmosphere, just where the palace of the Duc de Nivernois was sending forth the clash of its cymbals into the midnight air. Camille started ; and anticipating some danger for its thoughtless inmates, began to revile himself as he hurried along, for having presumed to utter one thought of condemnation touching the fairest and dearest of them all.

Finding it impossible to penetrate the avenues invested by an outrageous mob, Camille began to reconnoitre the issues leading from the Boulevards to the hotel ; whose guests remained ignorant of a tumult, deafened by the joyousness of their mirth. As he watched the open windows of the heated ball-room, he became an involuntary witness to the interview between Mirepoix and Emeline de St. Florentin !—He distinguished not, indeed, the express words passing between them ; but the tender inflection of their voices reaching his ear, misled him into a belief that gallantry, rather than patriotic sympathy, had withdrawn them from the gay assemblage. He saw

the marchioness leaning, with heavy sighs, against the marble window-seat; and believing them to be directed to the ear of a paramour, could scarcely restrain his indignation.

"Deluded woman!" murmured Camille, as the flashing of the lights within revealed her more than earthly beauty. "Can no ties, no perils, no warnings restrain thee?—Danger is around thy path;—death perhaps advancing, with gloating eye, to feed his ravening hunger on thy cheek!—And he will find thee in dalliance with a libertine!"

A wilder shout from the inner court of the hotel proclaimed some fresh outrage. — But the time for warning was expired: Mirepoix and his partner had already left the window. Again Camille accused himself of having been harsh and premature in his judgment. But ere he had time to amend his fault by attempting to gain access to the mansion, he beheld the object of his anxiety, carefully guarded by the stranger whom he believed to be her lover, effect her escape from the now alarmed assembly. He heard the chevalier, in terms of the fondest endearment, urge her to be calm and silent during their flight. — As she clung to his protecting side, Camille, with indignant wonder, heard him name her "*Emiline—his Emiline!*"

"And I!" he exclaimed, "I who scarcely dared entitle her thus, even in my purest prayer — even in the secret solitude of my midnight tears!" —

Her mantle touched him as she passed, — and he shook off the contact as if it could convey a pestilential contagion. — Still the thought of other times, and the feelings with which they were interwoven, prompted him to follow the footsteps of the fugitives. He saw the marchioness deposited in safety at her hotel; and alternately thanked Heaven for her escape, and cursed her preserver!

The night was now far advanced; and as Camille, weary and disgusted, regained his own habitation, he felt in some degree consoled for the ill success of his enterprise by his discovery of the unworthiness of the person who had formed the chief incitement to his zeal. But on

entering his chamber, the first object which met his observation was a communication in cipher from La Fayette, re-animating in a moment his exhausted faculties.

"You have been too late, and fatally so! — I will not prejudge your remissness, but require you to repair the fault by proceeding a second time — and *instantly* — to the same quarter. — See *her* at all risks. Tell her the attempt has failed; — that suspicion is astir, and suspended only by the lateness of the hour. The Committee of Research will visit her by daybreak. — Her escape must be immediate or unavailing."

Camille had no hesitation in referring the mysterious *her* to the Marchioness de St. Florentin. He threw on his uniform, believing its authority might be some advantage in case of an altercation with any civil officer. As he once again, and with a beating heart, approached her hotel, he trembled on discovering that faint red streaks were already discernible in the east!"

On Emiline's return from the ball, the venerable Laporte came forward to receive her; and when Camille once more, and with uncompromising peremptoriness summoned the porter from his slumbers, he demanded, in the name of La Fayette, and by virtue of his habit, an immediate interview with the old steward to whom from his boyhood he had been favourably known. In this startling emergency, the old man evinced more presence of mind than could have been expected. Readily entering into the scheme of light suggested by Camille on the hint of a passport enclosed in the communication of General La Fayette, he agreed in the necessity of exaggerating the danger of the marchioness's position, in order to expedite her departure. The foresight of Valazy had posted his own carriage in the adjoining street; and Laporte himself undertook to accompany the instant flight of his mistress and her children. Both were sanguine of success; when the obstinacy of Emiline overthrew their scheme, and restored her entire influence over the mind of her worshipper. — He looked upon her beauty, — listened to her noble declarations, — and again adored her! —

But it was no time to indulge in such emotions. To

save her — to guard her — to ward off the coming blow, was his immediate consideration. Already he seemed to behold her abandoned to the ruffianly insolence of the minions of the law, — already an agony of apprehension overwhelmed his heart. — The danger, the imminent danger of his fugitive king became as nothing. For in the cause of Louis, many a sword would be drawn, many a pleading voice become eloquent. — But Emiline — the helpless mother of still more helpless children — Emiline was forsaken by her lawful protector, and abandoned to perils provoked by his own rashness !

All that remained for him was to repair without delay to the Hôtel de Ville ; and gather from La Fayette some tidings of the royal fugitives, and instructions for the further defence of those endangered by their escape from Paris.

CHAPTER XX.

*Les droits qu'un esprit vaste, et ferme en ses desseins,
Prend sur l'esprit grossier des vulgaires humains.*
VOLTAIRE.

As Camille approached the Hôtel de Ville, with the hope of instant admittance to a confidential audience, he was struck, on approaching the Place de Grève, by an appearance of premature animation in the adjoining streets. The shops, usually closed at so early an hour of the morning, were filled with idlers, evidently assembled by motives of curiosity rather than of commercial interest ; while even in the streets and the square, detached groups of busy politicians were engaged among themselves in some vehement discussion, connected with some new crisis of public interest. The names of the king and queen, repeated in various tones of disgust, hatred, and resentment, soon struck his ear ; and long before he gained the steps of the Hôtel de Ville, the rumours of the angry multitude acquainted him that authentic intelligence of the flight of their majesties had that moment reached the authorities.

Hastening up the crowded stairs, he perceived La Fayette engaged in earnest conversation with Bailly, Gou-vion, and a woman of the queen's wardrobe attended by two soldiers of the National Guard, who seemed to have been the bearers of this startling piece of information. While the former was apparently deliberating on some further precautionary measure, Camille bent a look of eager inquiry on his countenance, to ascertain, if possible, to what extent the politic general had been previously involved in the affair. The character of this remarkable man was still imperfectly developed. He was known to have brought with him from the emancipated provinces of America an enthusiastic zeal for the cause of civil liberty; yet the courtly urbanity of his address repelled all familiarity on the part of the rude and ferocious faction of the Parisian revolutionists, inducing them to suspect his secret inclination towards that aristocratic ascendancy, with which his own mind and manners appeared so well assimilated. The frankness and *bonhomie* of his demeanour towards the populace, however, his seeming deference to their prejudices, and above all, the intrepid coolness of his demeanour on occasions of popular disturbance, secured him the confidence of the citizens, and an unlimited command over the passions of the mob. In more than one crisis of public excitement, his simple authority had arrested the course of national violence, and suspended the effusion of blood: so true it is that a man never obtains a complete sway over the passions of others, but when he exhibits a mastery over his own.

But Camille, although amply satisfied of the rectitude of La Fayette's principles, and of his honest desire to strip the monarchy of his native country of the dangerous prerogative assumed by the House of Bourbon, could not divest himself of a belief that the general was inclined to favour any measure, whereby the anointed sovereign of France might be saved from ultimate sacrifice;—a sacrifice which his recent humiliation rendered a superfluous atonement,—and a needless lesson to the despotic monarchs of other countries or future ages. Thus far, however, was clear, — that he was fully aware of the part taken in the plot by the

family of St. Florentin. Profiting by a moment's confusion in the chamber, he turned towards his aide-de-camp, as if for the purpose of professional instruction.

"Your agency, sir, I perceive has been unavailing!" said he, in a stern but subdued tone. "I require no particulars," he continued, waving his hand, as Camille was about to enter on an explanation. "Enough that this rash enterprise has been attempted!"

Then turning to the two soldiers of the National Guard, he inquired whether any indications had transpired of the route taken by the fugitives; and learning that general opinion pointed to that of Flanders, he appeared to coincide in the belief; and continued to receive, with composed indifference, a thousand contradictory statements poured in upon him relative to the mode of escape, and direction of flight adopted by the royal family.

It has since been ascertained, that the first person encountered by Marie Antoinette and Madame Elizabeth, on leaving the Tuileries, was La Fayette himself, mounted on the white charger which rendered him so conspicuous to the Parisian populace; but whether his blindness on the occasion were real, or a merciful assumption, is still doubtful.

The populace crowded together in the Place de la Grève, and under the windows of the Hôtel de Ville, where the body of the municipal officers were now assembled, soon exhibited their usual ferocity; and the menaces and imprecations of the mob were distinctly heard in the council chamber, upbraiding Bailly the mayor of Paris, and even La Fayette himself, as accomplices in the escape of the royal family. Bailly was anxious to exculpate himself from this unjust charge, by haranguing the people; but La Fayette, who had already beheld Foulon and his son-in-law Berthier de Sauvigny, dragged from the balcony to an immediate and cruel death, strove by the coolest expostulations to dissuade his colleague from the rash attempt;—pointing out at the same time to his notice the fatal lantern prepared for them.

"The National Assembly is aware of the peril of our predicament," said he, without deigning to explain in what manner he had procured the welcome intelligence. "Our

safety cannot be a matter of indifference to them : — leave it in their hands.”

To the satisfaction of all parties, his conjectures were speedily realised. In another minute, the tumult of the riotous populace was suddenly checked ; and a considerable detachment of the National Guard was seen by the prisoners in the council-chamber to traverse the square fronting the Hôtel de Ville. No obstacle was opposed to their passage, when it became known that these troops were commissioned to conduct the mayor, as well as La Fayette and Gouvion, before the *Assemblée Constituante*, to render an account of their culpable negligence ; and be present at the opening of the proclamation of Louis XVI. to the Parisians, — explanatory of the motives of his flight, and descriptive of the injurious treatment to which he had been subjected. The irritated mob readily gave way to the passage of their general and his companions, under military escort ; persuaded that they were only surrendering their victims to the judgment of a tribunal, as severely disposed towards the prisoners as their worst feelings could desire.

The measures of the *Assemblée Constituante* in this exigency exhibited a character of promptitude, energy, and moderation, such as it rarely displayed on less important occasions. The ministers were severally apprised of the escape of the king, and summoned to assist at a general deliberation on the measures to be adopted. No person was allowed to pass the barriers during the day. Couriers were despatched into the departments, preventing the progress of all travellers towards the frontiers. Strong detachments were placed in the disaffected sections of the city, and others stationed for the protection of the Hall of Assembly. When La Fayette and his companions reached the bar, Alexandre de Beauharnois*, who acted as president, was in the act of making known to the assembly the report of the commissioners who had been dispersed throughout Paris to investigate the dispositions of the people ; and of the deputies who had been commissioned to ascertain whether the crown jewels had been carried off by the royal fugitives : — and the assurance conveyed

* The first husband of the Empress Josephine.

of the perfect tranquillity of the citizens and their unabated confidence in the integrity of their representatives, seemed to impart a corresponding degree of firmness and self-security to the proceedings of the Assembly.

The examination of La Fayette and his coadjutors was followed up with a sufficient appearance of rigour to satisfy the misgivings of the mistrustful populace. A direct charge was made of culpable negligence on the part of the National Guard, — and co-operation on that of the municipality, — but only to be plausibly refuted ; and the ministers of the crown having at length arrived, the celebrated proclamation of Louis XVI. was officially read to the Assembly.

The reproaches and accusations against the National Assembly, contained in this interesting address, served of course rather to irritate than to effect any intimidation upon its auditors. They were upbraided by the king with having attempted the destruction of the French monarchy, and with seeking to extend the civil anarchy of Paris throughout every part of the kingdom ; but nothing could be more easy than to refute a charge, in which the party accused was both judge and juror. The excesses and rapacity of the court of Versailles, the unconstitutional innovations of the former ministry, as well as the unyielding tenacity of the king, were again and again brought forward by various popular orators as pretexts for the severities and privations inflicted upon the royal family. “The conspiracy formed by the Bourbon family against the sovereignty of the nation,” became for the thousandth, but not, alas ! for the last time, a specious watchword to the passions of the assembly ; and though the declamations of Mirabeau no longer dignified the phrase by their hollow eloquence, the theme was hotly and successfully pursued by others, who covered their deficiencies with the mantle of the prophet.

Before the Assembly proceeded to the order of the day, La Fayette begged to point out to their notice the aide-de-camp by whom he was attended at the bar.

“In presenting to you, gentlemen,” said he, “this young soldier as the kinsman and namesake of your esteemed

colleague, Maximilien Valazy, the friend of the people and undeviating opponent of their tyrants, I feel secure of interesting your confidence in his execution of your commands. I am about to despatch him officially on the route to Mons, which appears the probable direction of the journey of their majesties; claiming such assistance of the local authorities as may best enable him to secure the persons of the fugitives, without violating the respect due to a sovereign of the French nation."

"Two couriers were sent off in that direction nearly an hour ago," observed Pethion. "I should recommend the road to Metz; as it is evident that the aristocrat Bouillé is as a magnet by whose attraction we are likely to unearth the royal fox which has escaped our vigilance."

"I have already despatched my senior aide-de-camp, Monsieur Antoine de Romeuf, on the route to Metz," observed General La Fayette composedly.

"The more reason," retorted Pethion, "for following up his mission by that of the Capitaine Valazy. Romeuf is known to be one of those idle Mirliflors, whose minds have been polluted by the sorceries of the Circe of Versailles. His secret inclinations towards the royal cause will not fail to betray our own, unless we drive the nail into the block by a second blow of the mallet. Let Valazy proceed without further parley to Châlons."

This opinion being confirmed by the general voice of the Assembly, La Fayette delivered to Camille the instructions which were to regulate his proceedings.

"You will use your best expedition in a mission so critical; but I feel persuaded that your utmost haste will not gain sufficient ground on the fugitives," said he, glancing from the clock suspended over the seat of the president to the countenance of his aide-de-camp; and, as it appeared to Valazy, with a look of peculiar significance. "Go, sir!" he continued, resuming his usual air of stern authority. "I am satisfied that you appreciate the importance of your charge; and that *none* of my instructions touching this important affair will be forgotten or disregarded."

On leaving the Assembly to proceed to its deliberations, while he visited the château of the Tuilleries for further

investigation, La Fayette was greeted by the populace with cries of disapprobation and vengeance, and Camille, and one or two officers of his staff by whom he was accompanied, attempted to surround his person with a view to his defence, as he traversed the infuriated multitude. But the general, with a smile of perfect self-possession, motioned them from his side, and boldly advanced through the hootings of the mob.

"My friends!" said he, to those of the discontented nearest to him, "you are pleased to term the escape of the king a national misfortune. What would you say to a counter-revolution calculated to destroy the liberty you have acquired?"*

The fickle crowd, lending to these expressions a more extended implication than had been anticipated by the speaker, now flew into an opposite extreme; and began to hail the departure of Louis XVI. as an event auspicious to their interests.

"We are at length freed from the Bourbon gang!" they exclaimed, with renewed shouts in honour of their favourite commander; while a portion of the populace even raised a cry of "Long live La Fayette; let *him* be our new king! — Yes! La Fayette shall be our king!"

The general, turning towards the vacillating crew with an air of mingled compassion and indignation, exclaimed, "And what have I done, my friends, to deserve your bad opinion? How have I merited that you should hold me worthy of no better office?" —

On this specious phrase, the citizens redoubled their huzzas in his honour, and suffered him to proceed upon his way; while Valazy seized the opportunity to escape for the execution of the important mission committed to his charge.

Within an hour, Camille found himself galloping along the road, which, alas! full well he knew to have been taken by the illustrious fugitives. But though resolved to interpret the glance of La Fayette into a secret implication that his haste upon the route to Metz need not be over-zealously accelerated, he had the mortification to discover at each

* Historical.

succeeding relay, that the couriers despatched by the Assembly, as well as his coadjutor, Monsieur de Romeuf, had outstripped him by nearly two hours, and that there was little chance that the ponderous equipages of the Baroness Von Korff could attain the frontier, before they were overtaken and arrested.

Satisfied, therefore, that his mission would be infructuous to the party it was intended to benefit, he found no motive to overlook his personal fatigue and anxiety, — nor his secret regret at being forced to abandon Paris under circumstances so fraught with danger to Madame de St. Florentin. Stung to the heart's core by the hauteur of her demeanour towards him the preceding night, — yet with a lover's inconsistency adoring the hand upraised in scorn against him, — Camille, as he urged his horse along the stately avenues of the road to Meaux, thought more of the perils and insults awaiting the unprotected Emiline from the deputation of the Committee of Research, than of those which the fugitive Bourbons had so rashly braved in their escape from the Tuileries.

Depressed in body and mind, — and sinking under fatigues to which he had been ill-accustomed by his recent modes of life, — Valazy, towards night, could scarcely keep on his saddle. His head grew dizzy, and his eyes appeared to rest once more upon that waving sea of heads, whose fierce undulations he had witnessed on the Place de la Grève, and whose horrible imprecations seemed to ring in his ears. Such — such — were the ruffians to whose animosity St. Florentin had dared bequeath his helpless wife and children! Such the human fiends to whose vengeance he had been himself compelled to abandon the idol of his soul! The mere thought of the indignities to which she had been perhaps already subjected, served like a spur to his flagging haste. Having obtained the refreshment of a cup of wine from a peasant proceeding home from his protracted labours in the vineyards, he pushed onwards with renewed activity. But on reaching the post-house at Châlons, he had the mortification to find, not only that the preceding couriers had considerably gained upon him in the hour of their arrival and departure, but that the equipages

of the royal travellers had excited no trifling degree of suspicion in their passage through the town. The post-masters on the roads of Lorraine were so accustomed to the spectacle of emigrants and fugitives, that they looked with jealous inquiry upon every equipage bespeaking a family of consideration taking the route to the frontier.

Valazy now perceived that all hope of escape was lost for the royal family, unless, indeed, they had been so fortunate as to secure a very active co-operation on the part of the Marquis de Bouillé; a circumstance to which popular suspicion already pointed previous to his departure from Paris. Yet it appeared to him, — judging from the trivial causes which had combined to negative his own eager attempts to obtain an interview with the Marquis de St. Florentin, — that some miserable fatality was attached to the undertaking; and that notwithstanding the generous or politic moderation of La Fayette, it would be as impossible to secure the progress of the measure, as it had proved to intercept the attempt.

His misgivings were speedily realised. On reaching Pont de Somme Vesle, a post-station three leagues beyond the town of Châlons, Valazy encountered upon the little bridge which unites the cross road to Varennes with the high road to Verdun, a messenger, taking his way at full speed to Paris; who, at sight of an officer of the National Guard, drew up to announce that the king and queen, or as he called them, "*Les royaux*," had been arrested at Varennes! The person of his majesty had been recognised by the light of a stable lantern intruded into the carriage at St. Ménéhould by a man named Drouet, son to the post-master, who had seen him at Paris the preceding year, on the day of the Federation; and who identified the countenance of his sovereign by the engraving on an *assignat* which he drew from his pocket. After giving such instructions to the postilions as insured the impossibility of reaching the post-horses despatched to Varennes from the opposite station to carry them forward to Dun, Drouet followed them on horseback. No escort was stationed for their rescue; and he denounced them to the authorities of the paltry town destined to be the scene of their betrayal!

The suspicions of the inhabitants of St. Ménéhould had unfortunately been kept on the alert during two preceding days, by the arrival of several detachments of dragoons, such as were stationed by Bouillé in all the different post-towns of the route between Châlons and Montmedy, on pretext of escorting a waggon-load of specie from Paris; but which did not fail to direct the apprehensions of the multitude to their real purpose. The troops commanded by the Duc de Choiseul and the Marquis de Goguelas, who were appointed to await the arrival of the king's equipage at Pont de Somme Vesle, had, in fact, been compelled by the insults of the mob to abandon their post; and, misled by misrepresentations that a heavy travelling carriage of the description they were taught to expect, had passed through the village at an early hour of the morning, Goguelas conducted his men back to Varennes through the woods of Clermontois, leaving the field clear to the enemies of his sovereign.

"But are you sure," said Camille, eagerly interrogating the man, "that it is really the king and queen you have secured?"

"Am I sure!" said the courier, indignantly. "Was it not my own good cousin, Drouet, who was beforehand with them at Varennes, — who summoned the National Guard, — imprisoned Bouillé's rampaging dragoons in the convent of the Cordeliers, where they were comfortably roosted for the night; — and, with the help of Procureur Sausse, the candle-maker, and Billaud, and half-a-dozen other townsmen as well disposed as themselves, blocked up the bridge with their market-carts against the passage of Dame Korff's berline? — *Parbleu! not'ancien, ces gaillards là* were not of the sort to let the Capet family slip through their fingers like a base half-crown."

"And where did you leave their majesties?" inquired Valazy, but too well convinced of the authenticity of his account.

"The bourgeoisie de Versailles was sipping coffee in Madame Sausse's back shop; and in spite of the hootings and howlings of the multitude gathered round the house, trying to flatter old Sausse into conniving at their escape,

by praising the freshness of the eggs set before her for breakfast, — and protesting she adored the smell of tallow ! — But *la commère* Sausse is no gudgeon to be fished up out of the Meuse with such a bait, and ——”

“ And the troops stationed in the town ? ”

“ Are deafening the king and queen with shouts for ‘ *la Nation*. ’ ”

“ I spoke of monsieur’s dragoons, and the regiment of royal hussars.”

“ *Tudieu !* of whom else ? I tell you Bouillé’s dragoons are shouting in honour of the nation as loudly as if they wore an uniform of the same facings with your own. — But I am loitering here, *Sieur Capitaine*, without thinking of the packet I am to deliver from *Procureur Sausse* to the commandant at Châlons ; — for which I mean to carry back in exchange a packet of assignats, in reward of my diligence, — to say nothing of the little sip of cassis, with which I must wash the dust from my throat in order to recount all these particulars to monsieur le maire at the *Hôtel de Ville*.”

This information was too detailed, and too conclusive, to admit of distrust on Valazy’s part. Fearful of implicating the Marquis de St. Florentin, who had not been specified by the courier as forming part of the royal cortège, he abstained from making any inquiries which could involve his name in the affair. But Camille did not doubt that the husband of Emiline had shared the arrest of the Duc de Choiseul and the Comte Charles de Damas, who had been mentioned among the group of prisoners detained in the mansion of the procureur syndic ; and he thought with horror and consternation of the penalty incurred by his share in the plot. Previous to the departure of the courier, Monsieur de Romeuf had arrived at Varennes, and been compelled to deliver to the municipal officer the official mandate of La Fayette, commanding the arrest of the royal family, and their compulsory return to Paris. But Valazy was aware that his young colleague entertained the most enthusiastic confidence in the intentions and powers of their common chief ; and that in attempting to assure the queen of the protection and security she

would derive from the guardianship of the commander-in-chief of the National Guard, he was only expressing his sincere conviction. He rejoiced, however, that the painful duty of bearing this mandate had not been imposed on himself. The reproaches of Madame de St. Florentin's illustrious friend would have been deeply afflicting to his heart ; nor could he have conscientiously uttered an assurance of safety, where he was persuaded of the existence of dangers of the darkest kind. The more fully he became aware of La Fayette's desire to favour the escape of their majesties, the more was he assured of impending dangers yet unsuspected by the public.

But his own course ! — How could he best reconcile his official duties with his persuasion of the secret views of his commanding officer, and the suggestions of his own grateful predilections ? — Suddenly recollecting the family connection between Bouillé and La Fayette, he resolved to make it a pretext for a private communication with the former ; and, instead of proceeding on the road to St. Ménéhould, struck off through the woods. Following the track left by the squadrons on the preceding day, — he took his way at full speed towards Dun, where he doubted not to meet with further intelligence. He was persuaded that, on the first alarm of the royal arrest, the Marquis de Bouillé, with the regiment of *Royal Allemand*, and others of approved fidelity from the camp recently formed at Montmédy, would attempt the rescue of the king ; and resolving, on his own part, to suggest that the attack should be made on the open road, rather than at St. Ménéhould or Clermont, where the National Guards were strongly interested in the popular cause, and disposed against the military, he determined to lend his best efforts to the undertaking.

“ If I am mistaken in my interpretation of General La Fayette's wishes,” thought he, “ and even should the attempt prove as abortive as every other measure connected with the fortunes of the king and queen, I must push my way to Metz, and over the frontier to Coblenz. — At the worst — I can die ! — Perhaps she will scorn me less, when she knows I have perished in the cause she loves ! ”

The sun rose upon his path, as Valazy pursued his way through the forest road. Dashing the dew from the hazel-bushes as he galloped along, he could perceive where the detachment of dragoons had forced its progress, by the entangled and fading wreaths of woodbine which had been rent away, and the wild roses trampled under foot. Still, notwithstanding these traces of recent passage, there was a profound depth of verdure, — a tranquil and fragrant loneliness about the place, — which, at any other moment, would have induced him to loiter on his errand, and contrast the almost sacred stillness and purity of the scene, with the fierce, tumultuous, and wearisome strife of the gorgeous dwellings and agitated city he had left behind. But he was urged on by an imperious duty, — even by the hope of suspending an effusion of human blood !

Fortunately for Camille, the horse with which he had been furnished at Pont de Somme Vesle was one of those reserved for the service of the couriers ; and he had every expectation of reaching Dun by ten or eleven o'clock. But on emerging from a stately grove terminating the woodlands of Clermont, with his eyes dazzled by the transition from their shadowy verdure to the scorching sunshine of the open fields, he perceived at some distance before him a group of four or five dragoons riding from the high road towards a creditable-looking farm-house ; — pausing occasionally to reconnoitre, as if dodging some fugitive through the meadows.

On approaching more closely, Camille, who had the advantage of a rising ground to assist his observations, perceived, at the distance of nearly a quarter of a mile, the person of whom they were in pursuit ; — a horseman mounted on a tired and wretched beast, who was skulking behind some hedge-rows, in a heathy covert of furze and broom adjoining the garden of a farm.

Camille, conceiving that the person thus pursued must be one of the couriers despatched from Varennes to Stenay, dashed forward to elucidate the mystery ; but in his course, he suddenly found himself on the brink of a gravelly hollow, — the channel of a deep and rapid current ; and being delayed by the difficulty of getting his horse across this

awkward pass, lost sight of all parties on regaining the level of the meadows. The sound of shouts in the distance served, however, to pilot him onwards ; and on passing a screen of maple bushes, he suddenly checked his horse, and as quickly spurred him to full speed again, on perceiving that, in the very next meadow, the fugitive was engaged in defending himself against a fierce attack on the part of four soldiers, marauding stragglers belonging to Lauzun's hussars. — 'The person encountering these fearful odds was no other than the Marquis de St. Florentin!—

Already, he had managed to disable two of his antagonists, — one of whom had fallen senseless, or perhaps dead, to the ground. But it appeared to Valazy that the Marquis himself sat feebly in his saddle, as if exhausted by his exertions. — 'To dash forward, sword in hand, to his relief, was the thought and work of a moment ! But ere he could reach the spot and interpose his assistance with any effect, the disabled dragoon, who had been wounded by St. Florentin with a desperate cut in the bridle-arm, drew out a pistol ; the flash of which traversed the eyes of Camille just as he dealt a tremendous blow on the soldier with whom St. Florentin was engaged.

Turning fiercely on the man by whom it was discharged, he was about to prevent him from drawing a second from his holster, when the dragoon struck down his sabre with the butt of the pistol he still held, and instantly repeated the stroke on the schakos of Camille, who, reeling dizzily upon his horse, fell stunned and senseless to the earth !

Rapid as was the progress of these movements, St. Florentin with a hasty glance had recognised the brave defender thus strangely and opportunely sent to his aid. But though he had as quickly the mortification of seeing him fall, — and as he believed, mortally wounded, — the marquis found in the pause occasioned by his startling intervention, all the advantage he so much required, and had a moment before believed unattainable. While preparing to close with the only dragoon still capable of very active defence, — for the last of the four fled the field on Valazy's approach, — he had the satisfaction to see a young peasant of the country gallop on a cart-horse to the spot, and lay about him such

lusty blows with a huge blackthorn cudgel which he poised in his hand as lightly as a riding-whip, that the two remaining soldiers took hastily to flight ; leaving their dying comrade in evidence of the pusillanimous part they had taken in the affray.

But alas ! — this powerful reinforcement arrived to late ! — A pistol-ball had penetrated the shoulder of the Marquis de St. Florentin ; and Antoine Marmin, the farming lad who had so materially seconded his efforts, found some difficulty in sustaining him upon his saddle, while he persuaded him to accept the shelter of the farm-house whose peaked gables were visible through the screen of maple trees.

“ You will be safe at Boisgelin, noble sir ! ” said the young man, on perceiving the decoration worn by St. Florentin, “ in case yonder thieves return with a reinforcement. It is said that half the garrison of Stenay have declared in favour of the nation, to the very teeth of the Marquis de Bouillé ; and I take it that the fellows with whom I found you beset belong to these mutineers.”

“ Do you know the marquis, my good lad ? ” said St. Florentin, as they entered the little court of the farm.

“ None better, sir. He has often stopped at Boisgelin on his cross-road from Châlons, to take a cup of whey from my mother, who has a famous name for it in the country. — *Holà ! Jean-Marie ! — Jacob ! — Baptiste ! — Bénéoit ! — help here — fly !* ” and while a tribe of rough-looking fellows with blue smock-frocks and cotton-night-caps rushed from the outhouses to perform the office of grooms to the stranger and their young master, Antoine carefully lifted him from his horse, and with some assistance conveyed him into the house.

“ Mother, I have brought you a wounded gentleman, half murdered by a cowardly band of the Stenay hussars,” cried he.

“ *Eh ! Jésus Maria ! not’ bon Sauveur*, — what has happened ? — My Toinon, you are covered with blood ! ”

“ It is not mine, mother — it is none of mine. But do not stand parleying : tell me where shall I convey this gentleman ? — He grows faint, and I can scarcely support him.”

"Here — this way!" cried Lison Marmin, recovering her prompt address and presence of mind; and she eagerly assisted to lay St. Florentin on her own state-bed, and to bathe his temples and hands with vinegar, while he lay in in his deathlike swoon.

As soon, however, as he recovered to some consciousness of the direful events which had occurred, he persisted in his inquiries of Antoine Marmin. "You know the commander-in-chief, — you know Stenay; you seem a loyal and well-intentioned lad?"

"I am, sir, — I do, sir! — But the Marquis de Bouillé is not now at Stenay. He slept at Dun last night."

"To Dun, then — to Dun, my worthy fellow, with this paper, if you would win the weight of your head in gold," exclaimed the marquis, searching in the bosom of his vest for a billet. "It is gone — I must have lost it in the struggle!" he faltered in a failing voice. But no matter! Time presses. — See the Marquis de Bouillé, — tell him the king is arrested at Varennes. Bid him fly to the rescue! — Say that his friend St. Florentin was murdered by a cowardly gang belonging to his brigade, as he traversed the by-ways of the country to bear him a few words hastily traced by his majesty at the moment of his arrest, imploring instant assistance. Tell him," continued the marquis, with perplexed and languid utterance, "that our cause is lost, unless through his exertions! —"

"I would do your bidding, sir," interrupted the young fellow, with a look of much concern, "both for the good king's sake — God help him! — and your own. But we have not horse or colt left in the stable of Boisgelin. My father is gone on brown Jocrisse to the market at Stenay; — and I have sent off Baptiste on the brood mare to fetch the surgeon of Briqueshen!"

"Great God! how unlucky!" faltered St. Florentin. "All then is over! — Alas! for Louis and my country!"

Lison implored her unfortunate guest to compose himself, while she attempted to stanch the blood that welled

in frightful quantities from his wound, increasing the painful dizziness of his frame.

“ It matters not,” said he, with a mournful smile. “ The surgeon whom you have so unluckily sought on my account will tell you, if worth his errand, that I shall not see the rising of another sun ! ”

And Lison, with tears streaming down her face, recollected this melancholy foreboding when she composed the limbs of the unfortunate Marquis de St. Florentin for the grave, before the dawn of the following day !

VOLUME THE SECOND.

CHAPTER I.

Fit me with such weeds
As may bescem some well reputed page ;
Yet tell me, first, how will the world repute me
For undertaking so unstaïd a journey ?
I fear me, it will make me scandalised.

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

MEANWHILE, Madelon, even in the tranquil valley of Manoir, was not without her alarms. Content to be a keeper at home from January to December, she was too happily occupied in reclaiming her garden from the ruinous neglect into which it had fallen, and in establishing the details of her farm, under the care of a worthy automaton, named Tonton, acting as her prime minister, to seek for external amusement. A stroll along the meadows by the side of the Lianne, or an evening gossip with monsieur le curé in the apartments of Manoir, handsomely furnished by her son in order to pacify her regrets for the burnished walnut-wood presses of Grand Moulin, — varied the uneventful monotony of her existence.

But in the middle of the month of June, a letter from Camille enabled Madelon to greet her reverend visiter, one evening, with an air of mingled ecstasy and mystery. Instead of conducting him, as usual, into the saloon, she invited him, with a significant air, to retain his three-cornered beaver, and take a stroll with her through the river meadows or in the great avenue ; and as soon as she attained a safe distance from the house, Madelon, with a thousand injunctions of secrecy and discretion, placed in the hands of the mystified old gentleman a letter from Camille ; acquainting her that her foster-child — he used no other designation — with her two children, would arrive at Manoir in the course of a day or two, under the care of

Laporte ; and that for better security they were to pass by his name, and in the character of his family. He further desired her to apply to the good curé for advice and assistance in any crisis concerning the interests of her beloved guests.

"I need not bid you be tender of them, mother," said he, in conclusion ; "for well I know that your own Camille has no dearer place in your affections than those whom the chances of these evil times thus strangely enable you to welcome under your roof. For myself, I can scarcely guess at what distant period I may hope to visit Manoir ; but be assured, that every moment of my absence is devoted to the service of those you love, and to the interests of my unhappy country."

The curé who, during the residence of Madame Valazy at the farm of Manoir, had become acquainted with the busy activity of her hospitality, especially in the fussy zeal of kindness with which she was wont to welcome his own accidental visits, was astonished to find how little she was disposed, on the present occasion, to devote herself to household preparations for the arrival of her noble visitors. She had not failed, in the course of many a preceding hour of gossip, to impress upon his mind every incident and circumstance within her knowledge, relating to the united families of Navelles and St. Florentin. He was as fully sensible as she could desire of the aristocratic importance of the old duke, — of the devoted loyalty of his son-in-law, — and the thousand excellences and charms of the marchioness ; and being equally conscious of the enthusiastic devotion of Madelon to them and theirs, expected to see the little household at Manoir thoroughly disorganised by officious labours of preparation for their reception.

But he was mistaken ; Madelon could do nothing but laugh, and cry. — Her beloved child was in peril ! — Madame la marquise was about to seek shelter — safety — peace, in her humble dwelling ; madame la marquise and the dear babes would once more embrace her — once more cling round her neck ; — madame la marquise had promised to make Manoir her home — to live with her till

happier times — to accept her services, her substance, her whole heart's devotion!" — and, in the painful joy of such a triumph, Madelon forgot for the first time to interest herself in the quality of her soup, or the texture of her homespun linen!

At length, in the exhaustion of her spirits, even these details claimed their share in her consideration; and the curé, on quitting her, — after an eager charge to be prudent in his mode of announcing in the village the expected arrival of his parishioner's Parisian kinswoman, Madame Laporte, with her father and children, — a charge which had been more advisedly enforced on Madame Valazy's personal observance, — beheld her eagerly engage in those hospitable efforts towards insuring the comfort of her beloved guests, which her emotion served to retard; and which the clumsy attempts of the elated Tonton did not much assist in forwarding.

On the morrow, however, all at Manoir was in its most orderly array; — all was swept and garnished. — The sanded walks of the little garden were raked over; — the sanded floors of the chambers newly sprinkled; — a few of the yellow carnations were culled, and placed on the toilet-table prepared for the marchioness; — while the silken coverlid quilted by her own fair hands for Madelon's couch was spread over that appropriated to the children. At an early hour, Madame Valazy, attired in her costume of etiquette, a black silk *négligé* and close cap of plaited Valenciennes lace, stationed herself at the head of the Manoir avenue; and not a cart, waggon, or chaise, appeared in the distance of the Paris road, but she eagerly waved her handkerchief to Tonton and his wife to throw open the gates of the court-yard, to the utter confusion of the bantams and turkeys, and the final mortification and disappointment of their anxious mistress.

Evening brought back monsieur le curé and his inquiries, — but no Emiline! The night was passed in fruitless watching; and when morning arrived, it again brought back monsieur le curé with something more important than inquiries; — intelligence of the escape of the royal family, — which had been communicated to the

commandant at Calais by telegraphic despatch, and spread rapidly through the environs. Aware, from the rumours of the daily journals, as well as from Madame Valazy's explanations, of the close connection subsisting between the St. Florentin family and the royal house of Bourbon, the curé could not but trace to this public event Camille's previous announcement of the marchioness's design to visit Manoir; and persuading himself that their majesties had in all probability followed a similar route after their escape from Paris, his anxiety in behalf of those persecuted sovereigns for whom his days were spent in prayer, and his nights in sorrow, became almost uncontrollable.

He now lent an eager ear to Madame Valazy's diffuse details respecting every carriage (and she had amply qualified herself for the task of description) which had traversed the Calais road on the preceding day; and having turned his old pony's head towards Condette, ascended the tedious paths of the adjoining sand-hills, in order to ascertain what vessels had profited by the early tide to quit the harbour of the Lianne; and what facilities were afforded by wind and weather to the passage of the illustrious fugitives towards a happier shore. — But the Curé Blaisel's investigations availed him little. — On the Calais road he beheld, like sister Anne, nothing but a cloud of dust; and on the glossy surface of the sea, only its usual little fleet of fishing-boats, gradually dispersing over the waves; whose calm mirror served to reflect their naked masts, and close-furled sails, seeking no aid from the breathlessness of the summer atmosphere. — But not a token from which he could gather tidings of the unfortunate Louis XVI. and his family!

Another night — another day — brought no intermission to Madame Valazy's anxieties; and she would have willingly found her way to Paris on foot, could she but have ascertained that no personal disaster had occurred to intercept the journey of Emiline, or cause the silence of Camille. The curé, acquainted with the arrest of the royal family, shared, with earnest sympathy, her apprehensions; but by his wise counsels he deterred her from attempting a thousand incoherent projects, by which she promised

herself to obtain the intelligence she coveted ; — representing to her the dangers likely to accrue to her son and to the St. Florentins, from the possible betrayal of their projected flight through her inquiries.

At length, one night, towards the close of the month of June, about a week after the receipt of Camille's letter of announcement, Tonton, who had been despatched as usual to the weekly market at Samer to procure provisions for the family at Manoir, brought back a proclamation of the National Assembly, setting forth that Péthion, Barnave, and Latour Maubourg, had been sent in deputation by the Assembly to bring back the royal family to the Tuileries, as state prisoners. But while Madame Valazy was perusing a document so calculated to aggravate her alarms, a low tap at the window of the apartment suddenly diverted her attention from the paper she held in her hands.

On a repetition of the signal, Madelon opened a door leading into the garden, and peered out through the twilight to ascertain who might be the intruder ; when she perceived a young peasant standing on the flower-bed beneath the window of the room she had just left. Madelon instantly began to scream an angry defence of her yellow carnations, to warn the thoughtless trespasser from the spot ; when coming hastily towards her, with an air and gesture very different from those of the clumsy boor she had expected to find in such a dress, and such a position, — the stranger implored her to moderate her voice and her resentment, making eager signs of secrecy and confidence. Instantly connecting this mysterious arrival with the absence of her beloved marquise, she motioned in her turn that the youth should follow her into the house ; where she hastened to withdraw the exterior keys from the locks of her sitting-room, and to close the jalousies, — so that the candle-light within might reveal nothing passing in the chamber towards the garden entrance.

Having thus secured the apartment on all sides, Madame Valazy turned towards her youthful visitor ; who, to her surprise, had thrown himself unbidden into a chair, and sat covering his face with his hands.

" You are weary, *mon enfant !*" said Madelon in a

kindly voice ; for she now perceived that the intruder was little more than a child. " You are weary, — let me fetch you some refreshments, — let me —— "

" No ! " said the boy, detaining her with a familiar hand. " No ! do not stir — do not leave me, Madame Valazy ! — Do you not recognise me ? "

Madelon, fairly puzzled, looked on the slender figure of the young Picard, attired in the fustian *blouse* or smock-frock of the country, belted round the waist with a leathern girdle ; while the black curls, now released, by the removal of a serge cap, fell profusely over his forehead, and half concealed his pale and care-worn face. There was something in the countenance half familiar to Madelon's recollection ; but when she strove to amend her observations and retrace the remembrance, the quivering lips and tearful eyes of the boy besought a suspension of her scrutiny, and betrayed the mystery.

" *Ciel !* " she exclaimed, advancing towards her guest, " impossible ; — quite impossible ! — and yet, surely I am not mistaken, — surely I am speaking to Mademoiselle Delplanque ? — *Dame !* — I was going to make a strange mistake ! " — and Madelon, provoked to find her hopes disappointed of obtaining intelligence of the Marquise de St. Florentin, was far from courteous in her welcome to the young *mercière* ; while Euphrosine, readily perceiving a coolness on the part of her hostess, and attributing it to the unseemly disguise in which she had made her appearance at Manoir, began to weep bitterly.

Now Madelon had never accustomed herself to witness unmoved this weakness of her sex ; and no sooner did Euphrosine's tears begin to fall, than she recalled her especially to remembrance in two capacities, equally interesting to her prejudices, — as a *protégée* of Madame de St. Florentin, and as the reputed *fiancée* of her son ; — and though she could not perceive that either the one or the other afforded a pretext for Mademoiselle Delplanque to run about the country in masquerade, she insisted on attempting to restore her visiter's composure with a glass of wine, or a glass of water ; hoping gradually to arrive at the solution of the enigma.

Unfortunately, however, she tempered her hospitality with reiterated inquiries concerning "Monsieur, her good father;"—a name which served to renew poor Euphroisine's distress, without procuring further explanation of the mystery.

"The poor silly old man is certainly dead," thought Madelon; "and the young lady his daughter has lost her senses in consequence. Perhaps she has come to tell me she has now no protector, and to ask a home at Manoir;—or perhaps, to demand my consent to her marriage with my son.—I trust Camille has not acted unfairly or unhand-somely towards her in her misfortunes; for she is a pretty gentle creature, when she is out of that hoity-toity dress. I wonder, by-the-bye, how she found out that I had left Grand Moulin?—My son fancies that my removal here has been kept a secret from the whole world.—If I might venture to inquire, mademoiselle," said she, turning towards Euphroisine —

"Hush!" interrupted her guest — "call me, Jacquot. — You would not surely betray me, Madame Valazy?"—

"*Ma fi!* — I am just now lost in a world of wonder. I do not yet know what secret I have got to keep."

"Have you heard nothing from Paris?"—

"Last week, Mademoiselle — Jacquot — that is —"

"Last week you received a letter from your son, announcing the probable arrival of *our friend* —"

"I did, I did!" cried Madelon, with renewed hopes of obtaining information relative to her darling child.—"I did! — but the time passes; and I hear nothing further from either of them. Are you come to give me tidings of them? — The king and queen are taken; but the marchioness! — tell me, I beseech you, that my dear lady is safe?"—And Madelon, hitherto so frigid in her demeanour towards her disguised visiter, now approached her with tears in her eyes; and seizing her hands, appeared to hang upon Euphroisine's reply to her inquiries.

"Madame la marquise is for the present safe," replied Mademoiselle Delplanque, in a subdued tone: then, throwing herself into Madame Valazy's arms, and resting upon her shoulder in an agony of tears, she exclaimed in broken

words, "But arm yourself with courage, dearest Madame Valazy —"

"My son! — what of my son?"

"Calm yourself — he lives — but ——"

"Do not torture me by this cruel suspense. Tell me, I implore you, tell me all you know of my Camille."

"Your son is wounded. — The Marquis de St. Florentin has fallen a victim to his exertions in the royal cause. — Their majesties are once more prisoners in the hands of their persecutors!"

This last piece of intelligence, which the enthusiastic Euphrosine had reserved as the acmé of her overwhelming tidings, fell far more lightly upon the heart of the good Madelon than her previous information. Emiline, a broken-hearted widow; — Camille, wounded and unfortunate! — She had no fortitude to endure this twofold stroke of affliction. It was Euphrosine who now found it necessary to devote her attentions to the consolation of her hostess.

"But I do not understand," said Madame Valazy at length, drying her tears, and looking round as if to collect her bewildered faculties, — "I do not understand how you became commissioned to acquaint me with these disasters. — Do you arrive from Paris?"

"From Arras."

"And my Camille is at Arras? — So near me! yet to leave me in ignorance of his danger."

"Pardon me, madame ——"

"Ah! call me Madelon — you come to me from my son ——"

Euphrosine pressed her hand, as if to thank her for the first gracious word uttered during their conference; then reseating herself, resumed her explanation. "It is now nearly two months since my father, alarmed by the interference of the agents of the provisional government, compelled me to quit Paris, and establish myself for a time at Arras — his native place — among ——"

"Forgive me, dear young lady!" interrupted Madelon, imploringly, caring very little where the *ex-mercier breveté de la majesté* had been inaugurated into the cares of mortal

existence, or whether the domicile of Mademoiselle Euphrosine were appointed in the province of Artois or the Quartier du Marais. "Pardon me, it was of the marchioness and of my son you promised me tidings."

"You desired me, at the same time, to acquaint you with the manner in which they had reached me," replied Euphrosine, with something of petulance in her air; "probably from some misgiving as to their authenticity."

"Again, and again — forgive me!" said poor Madelon. "I am harassed — alarmed — impatient. Forgive me! I will not again interrupt you. — Misgivings? — *Dame!* — would I could entertain any doubt of your veracity. But you said you were residing at Arras?"

"Compelled by my father to quit Paris without acquainting Madame de St. Florentin or your son with my departure, — and dreading that my absence might prove a serious inconvenience to their plans and perhaps an aggravation of danger to the most beloved and unfortunate of queens — I addressed a letter some days ago to the intendant — Monsieur Laporte —"

"Ah! the good Laporte! — the faithful servitor of my precious lady —"

"Imploring him to grant me such particulars of the state of their affairs as, without compromising others, might serve to relieve my overpowering anxieties."

Madelon nodded an impatient acquiescence.

"His reply, — which I caused him to despatch to the hands of a third person, so as to escape the indiscreet examination of my poor father, — reached me last night; — containing, in a few hurried lines, a statement that the Marquis de St. Florentin, having accompanied the flight of their majesties, and been attacked by a party of Bouillé's revolted dragoons, had fallen under their hands; while 'the son of our excellent Madelon,' continued Laporte, 'in attempting to defend him, was sorely wounded by a sabre cut, and still lies on a bed of sickness at a farm-house between Dun and Stenay.'"

"Alas, alas!" interrupted Madelon. "It was in behalf of his noble foster-sister, then, that my brave Camille encountered his danger! And my poor bereaved lady! how

does she bear up against the loss of her husband? — My poor dear Emiline.”

A slight expression of surprise was extorted from Mademoiselle Delplanque, on observing that a mother could for a moment forget the danger of an only son, in favour of the afflictions of a person to whom she was bound by the vulgar tie of menial service. But Euphrosine, amiable and feminine as she was, had not reached the period of maturity which could enable her to estimate the force of affection existing between a woman and the infant she has nourished at her bosom; and was born half a century too late to appreciate the intensity of feudal attachment uniting the loyal vassal with the heir of his master's house.

“Madame de St. Florentin,” continued she, “has not been left to the indulgence of her personal afflictions. This is no time for a faithful subject of France to sit by his own hearth, selfishly lamenting his private sorrows. The marquis, by his noble devotion to the cause of his sovereign, was at least enabled to bequeath to his widow the glorious privilege of having suffered, and of suffering, in their cause.”

There was an excess of magnanimity in this view of the case, which poor Madelon regarded as highly superfluous. She had no patience that Emiline should be made a martyr, even in a cause so legitimate as that of the Bourbons.

“Ah! poor child!” she exclaimed, wringing her hands, “lonely in her wretchedness, in that melancholy barrack of an hotel! — Monsieur le Duc, decrepit and infirm, incapable of assisting her, — her noble brother in Italy! Why was not her poor old nurse by her side, to comfort and assist her? Do you remember, mademoiselle, how graciously she condescended to watch by my son Camille, when — ah! why am not I by her side to comfort and assist her?”

“And *who* watches by your son, think you, during his present season of suffering?”

“My son is strong in mind, and strong in body! — Camille is capable of bearing his own defence, and of wrestling with his destiny. But Emiline — my poor dear lady!

— did I understand you rightly that since the loss of the marquis, she had been subjected to some fresh trial — some new affliction ? ”

“ On the discovery of Monsieur de St. Florentin’s share in the escape of their majesties, his hotel was subjected to an official visit ; his papers were placed under the seal of the Assembly, and the constables of the municipal body were stationed in guardianship of his property from the excesses of the infuriated populace.”

“ But the marchioness — the dear children ? ”

“ Have been removed by the interference of her kinsmen of the Mirepoix family, to the seat of the Marquis de St. Florentin, near Meaux. — Laporte was on the point of re-joining them when he wrote to communicate these disastrous events. It was by his desire, madame, that I have made you acquainted with these details — and ——”

“ He might have written to *me*, or to the good curé, methinks, and spared me many days of horrible suspense.”

“ Monsieur Laporte appears anxious that no direct communication with Manoir should invalidate its advantage as an eventual place of security for the family so deeply endeared to you both. I am now, Madame Valazy, on my way to Paris ——”

“ *You*, mademoiselle ? ” said Madelon, glancing significantly at her dress.

“ Ay ! in this disguise, which insures me impunity from the worst perils besetting the path of an unprotected woman. My desire to fulfil the commands of Laporte, and invite your own in return, induced me to turn from my way to execute his commission.”

“ And your father ? ” mechanically inquired the distracted Madelon ; too much engrossed by her afflictions to perceive that the hitherto pallid countenance of Euphrosine Delplanque reddened even to scarlet at this interrogation.

“ My father,” she replied in a more subdued voice, “ by tendering too dearly, in a former instance, the safety of his daughter, is perhaps the remote cause of the present peril of the royal family of France, — of the miserable bereavement of the widow of St. Florentin, — of the danger and

sufferings of Camille.—Had I remained in Paris, this unfortunate scheme would have received no check in the outset of its execution. My eagerness—my devoted vigilance, would have forwarded every flagging movement. But no matter!” continued she, perceiving Madame Valazy’s movements of reprehension at this bold assertion on the part of a young, obscure, and feeble woman. “No matter! it was his part to care for his own safety, and that of his child!”

“And has he consented to your re-encounter with the mischiefs proceeding yonder in that vile city?”

“I have not ventured to incur the crime of disobedience, by requiring his acquiescence. I have escaped from home, Madame Valazy, bequeathing my father to the consolation of his family, and the blessing of Heaven.—I am bound to Paris!—If it please God to render me instrumental in his holy works of mercy, I trust he will also deign to incline my father’s heart to forgiveness of my first offence against his will.”

“*Oui dà!*” said Madelon, devoutly crossing herself at this invocation to the Almighty. “When things come round,—and monsieur le curé assures me that Providence and our Lady in their own good time will bring all things square again,—no doubt Monsieur Delplanque will esteem himself a lucky man, if his daughter should have been instrumental in assisting the noble descendants of the house of Navelles.”

At any other moment, Euphrosine would have been provoked to smile at the narrow limits of action assigned by poor Madelon to her exertions;—at the prejudices which elevated Emiline de St. Florentin of Navelles so much above Marie Antoinette of France in her estimation.

“And now, farewell!” said she, rising from her seat, and drawing back the scattered locks on her pale forehead. “I have a guide waiting for me in the avenue, to conduct me back to Samer, whence I shall reach Paris in some public conveyance.”

“Not so!” said Madelon, the tears gathering anew in her eyes. “You go not alone; I must bear you company on this errand. If you, mademoiselle, have a call of duty

to the field of blood, what is the strength of *mine*? — Mine, whose beloved child — whose beloved *patrons* are engaged in the struggle!”

“It is not for me to combat your intentions,” replied Mademoiselle Delplanque coldly. “The tie which binds me to Paris is peremptory and immediate: it brooks no delay — nay! scarcely even that I have lavished on my visit to Manoir. But suffer me, madame, — suffer me, Madelon, to remind you that the best aid you can tender to your son, and —” a cloud passed over her open countenance — “to the widow of the Marquis de St. Florentin, is by retaining a tranquil and honourable home to become their refuge in the hour of need. Should you draw the suspicions of the authorities on Manoir, whither would your children turn for shelter when the blood-hounds are unloosed upon their steps?” —

“My children!” — murmured Madelon with a sigh.

“Yes, your children!” replied Euphrosine, with much dignity of expression. “The changes of national opinion — the noble exertions of Camille — and, above all, the equalising hand of misfortune — may thus unite their names without offence to either. But I waste my time, — I waste my words,” — she continued, struggling as if with some secret emotion. “Remain here, Madelon! — For their sake — for your own — remain here; and trust to me for immediate intelligence respecting all who are dear to you.”

“I will go to the curé!” said Madelon, dashing away the tears from her cheeks. “My son bid me consult him in any emergency of —”

“On your *own* affairs, on those of Camille, make him your friend and counsellor. The present occasion dearly concerns mine, and others far — far more precious. You have no right to spread the intelligence I have confidentially communicated. — Farewell!”

Euphrosine reached the garden, while the perplexed Madelon stood wringing her hands in all the bewilderment of contending distresses; when suddenly returning, Mademoiselle Delplanque gazed for a moment on the venerable

countenance of the mother of Camille, and bent her knee before her.

“Grant me your blessing, Madelon!” — said she, with tender solemnity of voice and demeanour. “My expedition is unsanctioned by that of my father. — It leads to danger — perhaps to death; — let one benediction at least hallow its commencement!” —

Madelon, scarcely conscious of the terms of Euphrosine’s address, bent a glance of matronly kindness and commiseration on the helpless though energetic girl, kneeling at her feet. “May the Being of beings prosper you, dear child!” — said Madame Valazy, laying a hand of tenderness on the silken locks of the young enthusiast; and while she still meditated some further remonstrance, Mademoiselle Delplanque quitted the chamber, — the garden, — the avenue of Manoir, — and was hastening with eager and agile footsteps along the road to Sainer.

CHAPTER II.

I know I love in vain — strive against hope;
 Yet in this captious and untenable sieve,
 I still pour in the waters of my love,
 And lack not to lose still; — yea, Indian-like,
 Religious in mine error, I adore
 The sun that looks upon his worshipper,
 But knows of him no more. *All’s Well that Ends Well.*

EUPHROSINE, on arriving alone and unprotected in the capital, under the costume and designation of Jacquot Lavoine, had the affliction of learning in the obscure inn she selected for her abode, that their majesties, since their compulsory return to the Tuileries, were regarded as prisoners to the nation, — and in that capacity consigned to the safe keeping of La Fayette. — But while this intelligence redoubled her anxieties for the queen and royal family, she entertained sanguine hopes of softening, by the devotion of her services, those harsh trials which more efficient hands had been unable to divert; and was saddened, not overwhelmed, by the perils of her own position.

Aware of the impossibility of approaching the Tuileries

at such a crisis, — the public being now scrupulously excluded from the gardens at the hours selected by the royal family for taking the air, and no strangers admitted within the château without an order signed by three commissioners of the Assembly and countersigned by La Fayette, — she presented herself on the day following her arrival, at the Hôtel St. Florentin ; and had the satisfaction of ascertaining the efficacy of her disguise in the careless harshness with which she was received by the Swiss. The poor old man's temper had been strangely tried during the period the hotel was invested by the officers of the legislative body ; and though the seals were now removed and the insolent agents of the Assembly withdrawn, he had not forgotten that his master's house had been dishonoured, — his master's wife and children rescued by flight from the minions of the law ; — while his noble master himself, — the young, brilliant, and gallant Marquis de St. Florentin, — was consigned by an obscure sword to an unhonoured grave ! — Poor old Barris could not endure to be questioned on topics necessitating a recurrence to these afflicting events ; and it was with some difficulty Euphrosine succeeded in ascertaining that the marchioness was still residing with the Duc de Navelles at Florinethun, near Meaux ; — and that the best medium of seeking a communication with the family was through her cousin, the Chevalier de Mirepoix.

It was only in the capacity of Jacquot the Picard peasant, seeking service in the capital with the claim of cousinship upon the old steward, that Euphrosine obtained even this scanty intelligence ; nor was she inclined to amend her information through an audience of Mirepoix ; who, having frequently noticed her, in attendance on his lovely kinswoman and in the antechamber of Madame Thibaut, might perhaps detect her through her disguise, and misjudge the motives originating her rash enterprise. She proceeded therefore to Florinethun, deeply grieved to quit Paris without obtaining any definite knowledge of the condition of those illustrious beings to whose service she had devoted so much that is dear to the heart of woman.

On this ground, however, she had still a trial to en-

counter. Old Laporte, though at the beginning of their melancholy interview, he wept upon her neck and blessed her for the zealous loyalty of her heart, was the first to rebuke poor Euphrosine for the unseemly attire she had assumed, and to remind her that where there is disguise, there is generally both guilt and shame. But Mademoiselle Delplanque satisfied herself by meeting her old friend's reproof in silence; without repenting her own precipitancy, or projecting any change in her measures.

"I knew your mother, child!" said he. "Your mother, who was in the suite of her royal highness the dauphine, was regarded as one of the loveliest and most virtuous women belonging to the palace. You are scarcely her inferior in beauty, you have hitherto rivalled the excellence of her reputation. Let it not be forfeited, my poor Euphrosine, by running about the country in strange disguises."

"Alas, alas!" cried Mademoiselle Delplanque, "I know that I am hazarding my good name in this arduous enterprise; but I did not dream, that a good, kind, generous old friend like yourself, would be the first to upbraid me."

"Nay," said the old steward, touched by the tears of vexation streaming on the cheeks of Euphrosine, "I meant not to distress you. Be a good girl, and all will be well. You are a favourite with madame la marquise, and perhaps—who knows?—with some who are still higher and nobler. Besides, you are the sole inheritor of your father's gains.—You have a face and figure which would have made themselves heard of in the saloons of Versailles;—and in good time, after all these troubles and tumults are ended, madame la marquise will no doubt deign to interest herself in procuring you a suitable husband;—the son of Monsieur Armand perhaps,—or my own nephew, the young notary at Rouen."

Euphrosine bore these affronting reprimands and condescensions with patience.—She was far more moved by the astonishing and fatal blindness with which the royalists, their households, and dependents, allowed themselves to anticipate a speedy termination of the revolutionary disturbances of the country. Though the monarchy was vir-

tually at an end, and the kingdom unreservedly subjected to the control of its National Guard, and fluctuating form of government, they persisted in believing that things would return to their original condition ; and that, with the exception of a few obsolete abuses, the *ancien régime* would be eventually restored.

But this persuasion did not, and could not, exist with the Marchioness de St. Florentin. The past could not be restored *her*, — nor the pleasures of the world knit anew around her heart their early captivations. — *He* was gone, — the friend — the beloved ; — the husband of her youth — the father of her children ! — *He* had laid down his life in the cause ; and it appeared to Emiline an immaterial triumph that it should be crowned with ultimate success. — Even the intensity of her maternal tenderness failed to console her in a crisis of so much anguish. She fancied that but for her children, she should have shared the enterprize — the perils — the sufferings — *the death* of St. Florentin ; — that she should have been spared the long dreary waste of desolate existence she now beheld extended before her. Then gazing on the innocent countenances of her little girls, — of her Emiline and Aglaë, — a sudden recoil on herself acknowledged their resemblance to their father — their claims on her affection ; till, folding them again and again in convulsive embraces, she no longer refused to be comforted ! They were his — and they were hers. — Was not the potency of such a tie sufficient to bind her to the cheerful and patient endurance of her widowed wretchedness ? —

In such a mood as this, Euphrosine obtained access to her presence. Now that the fatal deprivation she had undergone rendered the future malice of Mademoiselle Flavie a matter of contempt to Madame de St. Florentin, that treacherous ingrate had been hastily dismissed the establishment ; and Emiline, restored to the indulgence of holding unmolested conference with her friends, anticipated in an interview with Euphrosine the gratification of talking of St. Florentin ; and hearing a tribute of reverential respect to his memory, such as his devotion to the unfortunate princes of his native land so well deserved.

Of them, however, Emiline felt little inclination to discourse. Profoundly engrossed by the duties and affections of her sex, she was endowed with no heroic exaltation of character; and her cruel bereavement had estranged all her enthusiasm from a cause, in whose behalf her best and dearest had been torn from her heart. But though Laporte had obtained her unreluctant consent that Euphrosine should be introduced into her presence, when the sympathising girl really approached her, the new-made widow hid her averted face in her black garments, and felt the anguish of her sorrow painfully renewed by the observation of a new witness. Her little girls were playing at her feet, and she snatched them up, and kissed them tenderly, as if to re-invigorate her fortitude. —

“Euphrosine!” said she, extending her hand to Mademoiselle Delplanque, who respectfully raised it to her lips, “these are heavy—heavy times for us!—How fares it with your father—with yourself?—It is very long since we met, Euphrosine; you quitted us abruptly; and your absence and silence were a source of strange misgivings. Yet, believe me, *I* never distrusted your intentions, nor did *he*; for he was generous and candid as truth itself, Euphrosine, and could appreciate the generosity and loyalty of others.”

Mademoiselle Delplanque, satisfied that nothing would afford greater relief to the sorrows of the unfortunate marchioness than to give them undisturbed utterance; did not attempt to pacify the excess of her lamentations.

“He always said your departure was compulsory;—just as Laporte has now confirmed his opinion by an explanation of your father’s exercise of authority. Yet he would never allow me to write and question you, nor entreat a renewal of your exertions in favour of the cause so dear to him. He persisted that we had no right to influence the conduct, and compromise the safety of so young and prosperous a person as yourself. He reminded me, Euphrosine, that you were motherless; and that I should not act the part of a woman and a Christian mother, by inducing you into the perilous paths in which our own destinies were appointed.”

"The marquis, madam, was ever distinguished by the reputation of a nice and sensitive honour. That he deigned to exert it in my favour, is only an instance of his beneficence to one of the humblest of his coadjutors."

"Nay, dear Euphrosine!—St. Florentin considered you not in so lowly a point of view. He has often reminded me that, by the untiring zeal of your services to our unhappy sovereign, you had rendered yourself equal to the noblest of his loyal subjects. He bade me love you, and cherish you; and had not my affection outstripped his commands, Heaven knows with what eagerness I should now labour to fulfil the smallest injunction of my husband."

Again Mademoiselle Euphrosine imprinted a kiss on the extended hand of Madame de St. Florentin. "Exert your courage; dearest madam," said she, in a tone of gentle persuasiveness. "Heaven has not abandoned you!—Heaven has not decreed your total bereavement.—My lord the duke——"

"Ah! Euphrosine," interrupted Madame de St. Florentin, "who could have anticipated that my old grey-headed father would survive to witness the sacrifice of his young and ardent nephew—of his beloved son-in-law?—Who would have predicted that the venerable Duc de Navelles, in inspiring the heart of my St. Florentin with such enthusiastic sentiments of devotion to his anointed sovereign, was digging a grave beneath his feet?"

"And bequeathing to his children and their posterity a deathless remembrance of his worthiness!—Nay, madam—repine not that you have surrendered a hero to his country."

"Not so, my poor child!" interrupted the marchioness. "I have sacrificed my brave husband to the obstinate blindness of a faction, and a chimera of the divine right of kings, which my heart misgives me to be delusive. What can I call my country, if not the voice of the French people?—and is it not loudly uplifted against this luckless, this fatal cause?"

"How, madam!"—exclaimed Euphrosine, reddening with astonishment and indignation; are their majesties so unfortunate as to have forfeited even the support of the

descendants of the most loyal subjects of their realm? — Oh! do not repeat those words!" continued the young enthusiast, throwing herself at the feet of Madame de St. Florentin, and eagerly clasping her hands; "do not, do not repeat them! 'Till the bewilderment of grief shall have relaxed its influence over your mind, do not suffer yourself to reflect upon a subject, on which you cannot now decide or feel impartially."

"Blind enthusiasm!"—replied Madame de St. Florentin, mournfully waving her head. "Euphrosine, it is yourself who are misled by prejudices; it is from my own eyes that the veil has been withdrawn!—Heaven, in deserting the cause of the Bourbons, in leaving them helpless in the hands of their enemies, has given a sign for our instruction that the Divinity has withdrawn himself from the Ark of the Covenant;—that a new order of things will be sanctioned by the interposition of Providence."

Mademoiselle Delplanque, conceiving that the intellect of Emiline was touched by her misfortunes, forbore to oppose any argument to opinions which she believed to be the incoherent ravings of a disordered understanding. Rising from her knees, and leaning on the cabinet by which the Marchioness de St. Florentin had been seated on her entrance, she stood in mournful contemplation of the human wreck before her eyes.

Though the marchioness was not attired in the formal array of widowhood, her suit was of the deepest mourning, and the importunate hair was gathered out of sight, beneath the long black veil in which she was enveloped,—excepting, indeed, one or two disordered tresses, which escaped from their confinement, and hung loosely, and without grace, round her beautiful countenance. Her brow, her hands, her long slender throat, were of the transparent whiteness which fasting and incessant vigils naturally produce. But her cheeks were not pale; they appeared, on the contrary, to be scorched into fever by the bitter grief which had corroded their delicate texture; and this unnatural radiance of complexion imparted a wild and wandering expression to those clear blue eyes whose silken lashes were moistened by recent tears. Euphrosine thought she had never before seen Ma-

dame de St. Florentin look so lovely. She would have given worlds to restore her to a better frame of mind, by the alleviation of her afflictions.

"No, Euphrosine!" said she; "I am not distracted; — nor, if I rightly interpret the inspirations of Heaven, am I even deceived. Easy, indeed, is it to deceive ourselves among the banquets of the luxurious, — among the festivities of the vain and the frivolous, — the tumult of crowded theatres, — the flatteries of a brilliant court: — among those gorgeous scenes in which I was reared, and in which my martyred husband conceived his trust in the delegated rights of kings, and the nullity of the popular voice! — But when we are snatched from these wanton indulgencies, when we wrestle face to face with danger and death, when we find the mortal portion of our existence ebbing to its close and the cold reality of the grave gaping at our feet, — then, Euphrosine, then do we search diligently into the depths of our hearts, and assure ourselves that the divinities enshrined therein are not vain idols, to crumble from our grasp in the hour of danger! — Under the consciousness of our immortal responsibilities, we seek after *the truth*, Euphrosine! — We divest our opinions of all human prejudice; we behold them clear from conventional disguise; — we see them as we believe they will appear before the scrutiny of an omnipotent tribunal!" —

Mademoiselle Delplanque drew near to listen; for though her feelings and belief were circumscribed within the narrow limit of unqualified devotion to the House of Bourbon, she could not but be impressed by the energetic eloquence of Madame de St. Florentin. When her visit had been announced to the marchioness, Emiline was occupied in that dearest and most sacred task of affliction, a review of the tokens of affection, — the recorded vows — the letters — the pledges — the braided tress — the ring of betrothment, — bestowed on her by her lost husband. The cabinet on which Euphrosine was leaning, was the depository of these treasures of her affection; — treasures amassed from her very childhood, — treasures evincing the gradual progress of attachment between the two noble cousins, whose birth, for-

tunes, and virtues appeared to have formed them for each other's happiness.

Those letters — those terrible letters ! — What a monument of confiding love to be placed before a widow, knowing that the grave had closed over the heart from which emanated so many fond and generous sentiments ; — and which, but so short a time before, had beat in unrestrained affection against her own ! — He had so loved her — so cherished her — so cherished her children — *their* children, — that she could no longer comprehend the self-devotion with which St. Florentin tore himself from their arms to rush into the jaws of destruction. — *There* were the fond cheerful letters he had addressed to her, with her father's permission, during his American campaign. — *There* the few illegible lines traced upon a bed of agony, in order to relieve his lovely cousin's apprehensions, when he had been officially returned as wounded ; and which, hurried and difficult of decipherment as they were, contained a playful message to Madelon, and a recommendation to her protection of a favourite hound he had left behind him at Florinethun. — *There* was the passionate effusion in which he informed her that the consent of their families had fixed an early day for their marriage ; — there were the two affecting lines in which — being forbidden to agitate the invalid by his presence — he thanked her for the gift of their first-born child ! —

Was it wonderful that the re-perusal of these documents should open anew the sources of her grief, and again excite her displeasure against those whom she regarded as the origin of her misfortune ? — “ Had he died,” she exclaimed, “ on the field of battle, fighting against the enemies of his native land, with the approval of Heaven and the respect of his fellow-countrymen to hallow his memory and soften the anguish of his kindred and friends, — I could have better resigned myself to the calamity. But to behold so noble a heart — a life so valuable to his family — lavished in support of an idle scheme by which the lives of the Bourbon family have become forfeited to the indignation of the citizens of Paris, is indeed an aggravation of my sorrow ! ” —

"The affliction of a wife," observed Euphroisine, sterily, "should borrow no added poignancy from the circumstances which render her a widow. He whom we lament, was lost, it is true, in an obscure struggle which has tended to no good purpose; yet his life was as nobly laid down in the cause of France and of the Bourbons, as any which were sacrificed at Rocroy or Fontenoy."

"The cause of France is no longer the cause of the Bourbons!" cried Madame de St. Florentin. "The people from whom they received their rights on the kingdom, reclaim a gift which they conceive to have been memorably abused. The king himself acquiesces in the necessity for a regenerated constitution; — the queen publicly proclaims that she is educating her son in the principles of the Revolution. It was their mistrust of the people, their want of confidence in themselves, which induced them to irritate the prejudices of the populace, by furtively withdrawing from the château; and this breach of faith will only estrange from their cause the better classes of the revolutionists, and infuriate those human wolves who render the political disorders of the time a plea for the indulgence of personal vices and instinctive crimes."

"Can this be a daughter of the house of Navelles?" involuntarily exclaimed Euphroisine. "Nay then.—the destinies of the king and queen are indeed levelled with the dust!"

"No longer a daughter of the house of Navelles!" exclaimed Emiline, wildly flinging back the dishevelled tresses from her face; "but the widow of St. Florentin — the mother of his fatherless babes! — My husband, a subject of France, has fallen by the hands of Frenchmen. — Accursed be the cause which could unsheath a sword of enmity among men whom Heaven has commanded to act as brethren!"

"The holiest of covenants, madam, was cemented with blood," said Mademoiselle Delplanque. "But why attempt to reason with your despair? — Your affliction enfeebles your mind, and seals my lips from their purposed reply. — But alas, madam! the sentiments I have heard from your lips assure me that I must at least dismiss the hopes — the

expectations — with which I sought access to your presence. It is not because misfortunes thicken round the family of Bourbon, that I can withdraw from their persons that loyal affection which, next to the holy duties of my religion, has exercised from my youth upwards its claim upon my soul. I have no gentle or chivalrous blood within my veins ; — but would expend its last drop in the service of my king. I have left my father, — I have left my home, — hazarded my fair fame, — plunged myself into an element of terror and destruction, only in the trust that my feeble hand may devote its unheeded efforts to the one great cause.”

“ You have done wrong, Euphrosine ! ” replied Madame de St. Florentin, with more composure. “ In attempting to wield a weapon beyond your strength and unfitted for a woman’s hand, you have acted idly and presumptuously. You have outraged the tie of filial duty, — you have broken the bond of feminine delicacy.”

Euphrosine felt as if stung to the heart by these accusations ; for however conscious of the uprightness of her intentions, she felt that the truth, unvarnished by her enthusiasm of heart and mind, justified the severe charge brought against her conduct by Madame de St. Florentin.

“ Go back to your father. Do not leave his old age childless to gratify the vague chimera of your bootless loyalty. Go back to your father, Euphrosine ! or bitterly will you rue, when the day of your tribulation cometh, your desertion of the parent you are bound to honour. Of the little knot of faithful friends wont to gather at the feet of Marie Antoinette, one is already gone ; — and what, alas ! did he gain to recompense the sacrifice, but the tears of his Emiline ? — And when yourself, my poor child, shall have followed him to the grave, *who* will thank your enthusiasm — who even grieve over the blighting of your innocent and promising youth, unless the poor old man whose fireside you have abandoned ? ”

“ Had the heroes of former ages confessed the influence of such frigid calculations,” cried Euphrosine indignantly, “ many a great and virtuous action would have remained unattempted.”

“ I speak not to a hero — I speak to one of my own sex, whose hand should limit its labours to the distaff, —

whose heart restrain its ambition to the fulfilment of its domestic duties.”—

“Yet if the political principles formerly professed by Madame ——”

“Never, Euphrosine! — no profession ever passed my lips relative to the state of public affairs. I loved the queen. She was my gracious friend. I honoured the cause of the Bourbons; — for in my youth I beheld it honoured by my father, — in my maturity, by my husband. My opinions, my hopes, my belief, were circumscribed within the limits of my personal affection; my principles were all with *him*,” said she distractedly, clasping her hands towards a fine portrait of St. Florentin which adorned the chamber, “with him — *for* him! — I had no other trust — no other thought on earth!”

Euphrosine forbore to interrupt the current of her tears by a reproachful comment. At length she involuntarily exclaimed — “And yet you would desert the cause so dear to him?” —

“Desert it? — never! But I will not make my children orphans by Quixotic interference in measures which Providence has wrested out of my hands. My father’s infirmities render emigration as impossible an effort to *him*, as it would be an unwelcome one to me. My husband’s grave binds *me* to the soil of France, even though it should be made a field of bloodshed. I will not madly rush into the *mêlée*. The weapons of the factious and mischievous shall find me at my post, the bosom of my helpless family; but I will never officiously court molestation and insult.”

“Nay, then,” said Mademoiselle Delplanque, preparing to quit the chamber, “if your resolution, madam, be so firmly taken, my mission here is accomplished. I have but one hope remaining; — unless indeed the assistance of Camille should be withheld by your interference.”

A piercing shriek from Madame de St. Florentin arrested the words and the departure of the astonished Euphrosine.

“Who was it dared to breathe the name of an assassin in my presence?” — exclaimed Emiline with the vehemence of a maniac.

Mademoiselle Delplanque grew as pale as death. She was now satisfied that the incoherence of the marchioness arose from insanity. "Pardon me, madam," said she, soothingly, — "I spoke of no assassin, — but of the companion of your youth, — of your foster-brother, — of Camille Valazy."

Again Madame de St. Florentin uttered a groan of agony. "Of Camille, the murderer of my St. Florentin!"

"False! — if there be truth on earth!" — replied Euphrosine, with indignation equally uncontrollable. "And *she* can talk of ingratitude — of unrequited sacrifices!" — she continued, in involuntary soliloquy, — "she who rewards with so foul a charge the devotion of his prosperity — his very existence — every generous feeling of his heart!"

"Euphrosine!" ejaculated Madame de St. Florentin, sinking back in her chair.

"You know it. With all the prejudices you have recently adopted, you cannot blind yourself to that one truth; — that Camille would have perilled his life, and more than his life, for the benefactors of his mother — for the protectors of his infancy. The murderer of the Marquis de St. Florentin? — I would as readily believe, madam, that you had yourself raised a hand against his life!"

Euphrosine attempted to suppress her indignation, when she perceived that the consciousness of the marchioness was gradually deserting her. But on approaching to tender her services, Emiline eagerly repulsed her. Agitated and alarmed, she had no alternative but to open the door of the adjoining chamber to seek for further aid. How profoundly was her heart touched by the spectacle which presented itself within! The poor old paralytic Duc de Navelles was seated in his easy chair, gazing with a half imbecile smile on the sports of his infant grandchildren, whose joyous countenances were ill-assorted with the mournfulness of their black array. Hastily summoning the attendants of the children to the assistance of the marchioness, Mademoiselle Delplanque quitted the room. She could perceive that an expression of displeasure and disgust had already overspread the beautiful countenance of Madame de St. Florentin.

CHAPTER III.

'Tis hers the brave man's latest steps to trace,
 Rejudge his acts, and dignity disgrace,—
 When interest calls off all her sneaking train,
 And all the obliged desert, and all the vain,
 She waits or to the scaffold or the cell,
 When the last lingering friend has bade farewell. POPP.

It was now many weeks since Valazy was carried insensible into the farm of Boisgclin. The good woman of the house was fortunately a person more occupied with the cares of her family, than with the state of public affairs; and being what is termed in France *une maitresse femme*, was thoroughly master of her house, her establishment, and her husband. Marmin himself, a simple, uneducated peasant of the Clermontese, was as warmly inclined towards the revolutionary government as so craven a being could presume to be, in defiance of the stanch royalism of his active partner; for though at little trouble to vindicate the rights of man, as existent in his own proper person, yet in common with most French peasants, he had been sorely irritated by the aggrivement of the excessive taxes and oppressive game laws in force under the *ancien régime*. He was therefore well disposed to bestow his care and tending on an officer wearing the national uniform; particularly after he had been recognised by the procureur of St. Ménéhould, — who visited Boisgclin for the purpose of a *procès verbal*, — as belonging to the staff of General la Fayette.

Lison, meanwhile, was scarcely less interested in his favour by the affecting gratitude with which he had been named in his last moments by the unfortunate Marquis de St. Florentin; who, having survived for more than twenty minutes his removal into the house, had caused a messenger to be despatched into the field, to bring in the body of Camille, that it might receive the same decent cares about to be bestowed on his own. But when the surgeon, summoned to his assistance, on casting his eyes upon Valazy, declared that he still lived, — that the blow by which he had been

stunned would probably produce only a temporary injury, St. Florentin, knowing his own case to be hopeless, directed the attention of his attendants to be immediately transferred to Camille, whom he termed his friend, and brave preserver. Taking a ring from his finger, — a ring which bore the united ciphers of his wife and children, — he had them give it to the national officer upon his recovery ; then, calling for a pencil, wrote with a tremulous hand upon a leaf of the tablets he usually wore, the following hurried sentences : —

“ Farewell, beloved Emiline ! — Had the efforts made in my favour by our good Camille been prospered by the will of Heaven, I should not be thus prematurely torn from you and from our children ! Valazy will convey to my poor girl this last pledge of her lost

“ ST. FLORENTIN.”

This letter, and its accompanying token of conjugal affection, were carefully delivered to Valazy by the sympathising Lison, some days after the unfortunate St. Florentin had been consigned to the grave ! — But though the village surgeon was justified in his conjectures that Camille’s insensibility was the result of a heavy but not mortal blow, he had not been able to calculate on the terrible havoc made by excessive fatigue and anxiety in a frame far from strongly organised. — Constitutionally subject to violent attacks of fever, Valazy had only been restored to consciousness to sink into the still more profound inanition of a feverish disorder.

Meanwhile, Lison, attributing the continued illness of the young and handsome stranger to the wound he had received in his scuffle with Bouillé’s dragoons, judged it expedient to seek better advice for the sufferer ; when she had the mortification of learning from the surgeon summoned from Châlons, that her inmate was under the influence of an attack of typhus, attended with dangerous symptoms, which, without the greatest vigilance, would infallibly terminate his existence.

Madame Marmin, deeply distressed by this intelligence

promised with the greatest sincerity to devote her whole time and attention to her guest. During the brief interval of his consciousness, Camille had deposited in her hands the large sum of money he carried upon his person; a proof of confidence which did not a little tend to magnify her respect towards the young soldier. She revered him as the possessor of she knew not how many untold louis-d'ors; but far more for his generosity in intrusting them to her hands.

"How could he tell, poor young man!" said she, in a private colloquy with her son Antoine—"how could *he* know that he should be in a burning, raging, fever before morning—without power to lift his hand to guard either life or property?—Bless your heart, Toinon! he gave them to my hand, as if he had picked up a handful of pebbles out of the Marne. '*Ma bonne!*' said he, so graciously and so mournfully, 'keep this money till I recover; and if I am destined to rest my head under the sod of Lorraine, I make you my inheritor!'—There spoke the generous heart of a true gentleman!—One of your sneaking brigands of patriots,—if such a cur indeed ever had half-a-dozen pistoles at command,—would have hid them under his mattress, lest the sight of his ill-gotten wealth should tempt some brother rogue to anticipate the work of the hangman on his miserable life.—Mark my words, Toinon, it is only evil-thinkers and evil-doers who are apt to suspect that the wicked one is buttoned within their neighbour's jerkin."

"Ay, mother!" cried young Antoine, who was just at the age to be captivated by the martial glitter of an epaulet and sword-knot, "I knew him to be a gentleman before I so much as heard the sound of his voice. I was coming home, you see, from the barley-field, and going through my usual labour to get the team over the slough near the coppice, when what should I see but the poor marquis who is dead and gone, hand to hand with three fierce tigers of dragoons, in the outer field. And so I takes me Fanchon, our fore-horse, leaving cart and team as fast in the mire as the minster of Metz,—and gallops me to the spot! and who should I find joining the party, but a brave officer of the

Nationals, who cut in between them like a flash of lightning ; and if he had not instantly got a crack on the skull with the butt-end of a pistol such as would have felled Fanchon herself, or one of our draught oxen, the poor runaway marquis would never have been lying yonder in the mould of St. Mark's churchyard ; nor would the brave national captain have lingered here at Boisgelin, while there is work and enough, calling for him at Paris."

" But, Toinon, *mon garçon*," interrupted Madame Marmin, who, though not much of a politician or tactician, could perceive that some especial inducement must have caused an officer of the National Guard to side with an abettor, of the king's escape, — " you will find, as you grow older, that there are things which your eyes had better not see, and words which your ears would do better not to hear. — And so, child, if the procureur should come here, meddling and questioning with his ink-horn in his hand, recollect that you were sticking fast all the time in the slough with the team ; and that when you arrived in the meadow, you saw neither more nor less than three strange horsemen riding away, — a national officer insensible upon the ground, — and the Marquis de St. Florentin (for such it seems was his name) bleeding to death at the distance of a few paces. You would not wish to get our poor sick guest into a slough of his own, — into mischief with his commandant, — eh ! Toinon ? "

" No, mother, surely ; if I knew the rights of his case ; but — "

" And as to the ring and the letter which were left to his charge by the dying nobleman, and which, even now, in his sickness, he guards so carefully under his pillow, — we need say nothing on a point upon which we are not questioned ; and which, some how or other, my mind misgives me, might bring him into trouble."

" No, mother, surely — but — "

" And now go and cut me an arm-full of lucerne. For I was busy making whey for the sick gentleman at milking time ; and the cows are still in the homestead, and will not thank me for visiting them empty-handed. — Go, child, go ! — and remember that many a man has been brought

into vexation and difficulties by seeing and hearing more than his neighbours."

So strictly did young Antoine fulfil his mother's injunctions, that his recital, which was accompanied by the audible mastication of a greasy galette, not only baffled the inquisition of monsieur le procureur the process-monger, but when the Chevalier de Mirepoix arrived at Boisgelin, commissioned by the surviving family of the unfortunate Marquis de St. Florentin to inquire into the precise manner of his death and superintend the removal of his remains to the family vault, not one word was uttered by the Marmins which could induce him to suppose that the popular version of his kinsman's disaster, as circulated by the royalists, was untrue.

The chevalier's demeanour in the execution of his mission did not serve to conciliate the regard of the inhabitants of Boisgelin. The members of the royalist party were not, in fact, placed in a position to be lavish in pecuniary matters; and during his first conversation with Lison, he indiscreetly took occasion to designate the National Guard as the "*canaille* of La Fayette;" — a fatal and favourite word which the aristocracy of France were destined to atone with their heart's blood; and which, issuing from patrician lips, was sure to create an inveterate prejudice against the speaker. On the present occasion, it effectually silenced the Marmin family.

But the Chevalier de Mirepoix, having afterwards accidentally learned from the curé of the district, that a national officer who had been engaged in the mortal affray with his noble kinsman, was still lying on a bed of sickness at Boisgelin, returned to the farm, and insisted on an interview with the sufferer. Lison, however, was too much interested in the condition of her patient to allow him more than a transient glance at the unconscious Camille, whom he immediately recognised, and qualified as a traitor and an ingrate. Thus confirmed in her opinions, Lison exhorted Antoine strictly to adhere to their original plan of reserve; and Mirepoix having been advised that should a rumour gain ground in the country of his intention to remove the remains of the royalist marquis, the people might

be tempted to obstruct his march or molest him with insults and invectives,—he was glad to proceed to his melancholy task without a moment's delay, and to set out again with the hearse, at midnight, a few hours after his arrival at Boisgclin.

It was some days after his departure before Camille could be brought to a consciousness of what had happened, or of his present condition; and Lison, having been repeatedly advised by his medical attendant that agitation or uneasiness might prove fatal to the young captain, considerably forbore to revert to the subject. With all these precautions, his recovery was slow; and for several weeks, the virulence of his disorder reduced him to the feebleness of an infant. At length, he began with tremulous steps to creep about his little chamber, and question his physician as to the possibility of his removal and return to Paris; when one evening towards twilight, Antoine having entered the room with his usual superfluity of congees and apologies, announced that a young stranger wished to be admitted to a few minutes' conversation with him.

"With *me*?" exclaimed the invalid, staggering to his seat, oppressed by the mere idea of conversing with a *stranger* in his present state of weakness. Satisfied that his mother would leave home and happiness to establish herself as his nurse, he had been careful to despatch a few lines to her at Manoir, containing a general assurance of his safety, without the slightest clue to his retreat; and what other human being entertained sufficient interest in his destiny to seek him out in his obscure seclusion?

"With yourself, captain!" replied Antoine Marmin. "A youth of about my own age, and, as I take it, a stirring herdsman lad of my own sort. But none of this country, nor of the four provinces round about. *Sacré matin!* I should know them all, methinks!—I who attend twice a year at the great fair at Châlons (like an honest patriot),—who keep Christmas with my grandmother and her *pralines* at Verdun,—and Lent with my uncle, the canon at Metz,—*ma fi!*—I should know them all;—Champenois—Lorrainois——"

"But this youth, Antoine, did he give you no hint of his errand?"

"No, truly! I never saw a less sociable fellow. — I offered him a plate of grapes such as never grew on the brambles of Picardy, and a cup of the sparkler such as is seldom seen ten leagues from Epernay. But instead of pledging me like an honest patriot, the booby blushed like a girl, and entreated me to inform Monsieur Camille (he did not so much as do you the honour of calling you 'Captain' — like an honest patriot) —"

"Enough, enough! Toinon—the sparkler seems at least to have done some business on your own brains. Why did you not tell me from the first, that the stranger inquired for me by name?"

"How should I know it myself, Monsieur le Capitaine? — Even if I were as wise a man as my uncle, the canon at Metz—Heaven keep him for its own! — how could I possibly know that your name was Monsieur Camille, since you never condescended to tell me that you had a name (like a good patriot)?"

"Go instantly and conduct this young gentleman to my apartment."

"Gentleman, sir, gentleman? — Monsieur Camille le Capitaine, as I had the honour of observing to you before, he is a young farming lad of about my own years; and though my grandmother at Verdun always tells me to hold up my head (like a good patriot), for that I am as promising a lad as any in the province, I assure you, Monsieur le Capitaine, she never presumed to call *me* a gentleman. But perhaps, sir, you will deign to tell me the young lad's name, since you desire me to address him. Pray is *he* called Monsieur Camille, sir, like all —"

"Ask him yourself, Toinon!" cried Valazy, perplexed to know whether his apparent simplicity arose from thick-headedness, intoxication, or cunning; — "for truly, I think, you have no great scruple in pushing your inquiries."

Antoine was already out of sight. But he returned in a few minutes, ushering in a young peasant wearing the costume of Picardy. "He calls himself Jacquot Lavoine, Monsieur Camille le Capitaine," said young Marmin, with a

consequential air ; “ and that is all I can get out of him. — ’Tis but a web-footed gull from the Picard coast, after all.”

Euphrosine, for it was herself, on entering the little chamber, no sooner cast her eyes upon Valazy than she perceived herself to be recognised, and that he was about to utter an exclamation of amazement which must be fatal to her secret. Placing her hand upon her lips in token of silence, and assuming the air and dialect of a peasant of Picardy, she approached Camille with so earnest a tender of service, that Antoine, who still lingered, swinging the door in his hand, thought it high time to interfere.

“ If Monsieur le Capitaine Camille is discontented with me,” he exclaimed, in a tone of supplication almost amounting to a whimper, “ it is enough — he has only to say so ; and I will never trouble himself to wait upon me — that is, never trouble myself to wait upon him, again. — But if you should dismiss me, sir, from brushing your coat and bringing you your breakfast, only to make way for this finical stranger, I will send him back to Montreuil with no more whole bones in his skin, than in the woodcocks of an Amiens pâté.”

“ My good friend !” said Jacquot, attempting by the gentleness of his tone to deprecate the rising wrath of the Champenois —

“ Do not good friend me, silken-tongued hyena !” cried Antoine in so indignant a tone, that Lison herself, disturbed by the exclamation of her son in the process of sorting sorrel for her evening soup, intruded her comely visage into the chamber with a rebuke to Toimon, and a wondering inquiry into the cause of the debate.

“ This spindle-legged numskull, mother, is come to take my place from me, and to attend upon Monsieur le Capitaine, — and —”

“ My good Madame Marmin !” said Camille, with as much patience as he could assume, “ this lad is come to bring me letters from my family, and carry back those tidings of amended health which your kind care has enabled me to render so satisfactory.”

“ Do you hear, blockhead ?” cried Lison, delighted

with this double tribute to her merits ; “ do you hear how strangely you have misconceived the young man’s errand ? — A pretty specimen of hospitality truly for the honour of the province, that a stranger is to arrive at Boisgelin, and be welcomed after this graceless fashion ! Go, sirrah, — off — out ! — To the bean-stack with you ; — and leave Monsieur le Capitaine to read his letters.”

Shamed into a suppression of his grumbling, Antoine’s sabots were soon heard clattering along the bricked passage. Lison gently closed the door ; and Camille, on turning towards his unexpected guest, found that she had sunk into a chair, covering her face with her hands.

“ Surely, surely,” he exclaimed, approaching her with the kindest interest, “ the insolence of yonder oaf has not alarmed you ? Deign to inform me to what fortunate accident I am indebted for your presence here ; and by what strange coincidence my retreat became known to you ? ”

“ By no accident — by no strange coincidence,” replied Mademoiselle Euphrosine, who had now recovered her presence of mind, and with it a noble superiority to the awkwardness of her position. — “ Apprised by the public voice of the arrest of the king and queen, I quitted Arras in disguise, to assure myself by personal observation whether my feeble hand could be rendered instrumental to their service ; when, on my arrival at Paris, I discovered you to be absent from your post. My inquiries at the Hôtel de Ville instructed me that you were in Champagne — wounded, perhaps dying ; while my subsequent audience of the Marchioness de St. Florentin acquainted me, furthermore, that you were dying a traitor to your country, — and a murderer of the nearest kinsman of your early benefactors ! ”

“ How ! ” — exclaimed Valazy, with quivering lips and blanched cheeks. “ I do not clearly understand ? — You spoke of Madame de St. Florentin. — In mercy tell me, is Emiline still alive, — is she well, — resigned, — patient under her unequalled afflictions ? ”

“ They are not the less poignant,” replied Euphrosine coldly, “ that she believes them to originate with her foster-brother.”

“What can have possessed her—who can have possessed yourself with so groundless an idea?”—indignantly exclaimed Camille Valazy. “I know from her own lips how disposed she is to misinterpret and malign my words and actions; but I could not have conceived it possible that I—whose efforts in the cause of the royalists—I—whose interposition in behalf of the Marquis de St. Florentin have so recently brought me to the brink of the grave,—should be accused of a crime contrary to my principles,—and, oh! how revolting to my feelings! Thank Heaven for having placed in my hands the means of my vindication!—Unless the marchioness can withhold her conviction from the handwriting of her husband, from the dying pledge of his affection,—I am enabled to lay before her such proofs of my innocence as shall force her to retract the calumnious accusation.”

“I should rejoice in this assurance,” observed Euphrosine, with an unchanged countenance, “had I for a single moment conceded my belief to your guilt.—I know you to have acted weakly in this affair, Monsieur Valazy; but I never imagined you to be culpable——”

“And *she* could believe this of me!” ejaculated Camille, without listening for a moment to the ungracious commentary of Mademoiselle Delplanque. “She could fancy I would lift my hand against her husband!”

“Madame de St. Florentin has been misled by misrepresentations,” said Euphrosine. “She was taught to believe you the murderer of her husband.”

“And I, who believed that her prayers for the victim who had sought to sacrifice his life in her behalf, were the talisman preserving me through my hours of danger!—And Emiline has cursed me!——”

“It was but yesterday,” interrupted Euphrosine, “that I parted from the marchioness.—I left her bewildered with grief,—with the perplexities of her critical situation. But learning from Laporte with more detail than I could presume to exact from Madame de St. Florentin, that the Chevalier de Mirepoix had left you at Boisgclin, deserted and dying,—I resolved to pursue the route to Lorraine instead of returning to Paris, and——”

"Generous girl!" interrupted Camille, taking her hand; "it is from *you* only that I have met with candour and kindness."

"Nay," replied Euphrosine, calmly disengaging her hand, and walking to an open window on the opposite side of the room, "you owe me little. My journey hither has added but a mite to the mass of opprobrium and evil report which my wilful and wayward spirit has gathered against me. It is scarcely a week, Monsieur Valazy, since I was witness to the tears shed by your good mother for her absent son;—it is scarcely a day since I was forced to listen to the groundless imputations cast upon you by your noble foster-sister,—and to the sinister-presages formed by her steward relative to your present condition. On their account, as well as on my own, I resolved to satisfy myself of the life or death of one upon whom so much affection, so much reproach, so much interest was lavished, and on whom I myself rely for such kind offices as my mission of danger and devotedness to the royal cause may require."

"Still so true? Still sanguine of success?"

"No!" said Mademoiselle Delplanque, mildly. "I am now altogether hopeless. But many a cause has been ruined by the premature despondency of its adherents; and I have resolved to persevere till the last. When the day of ruin comes, what matters it that one so insignificant as myself be included in its work of devastation? Many honest and loyal subjects, on the breaking out of this revolution, predicted happy results from the new constitution. They believed—vain delusion!—that when the main columns supporting the ancient edifice of the French monarchy were forcibly withdrawn, the vast pile might still bear itself aloft. They saw the weeds and humid moss which time had gathered round those venerable pillars, and instead of disentangling the fibres, and cleansing them from incidental stains, suffered them to be torn from the toppling temple! Alas! that we should be doomed to mourn over its ruins!"

"Not so, mademoiselle: the king, in subscribing to the new constitution, has arrested its downfall. A few years—perhaps a few months—will restore the former order of

things, purified only from those abuses which no lover of his country can wish to see renewed. Even the mistrustful flight of the royal family will be forgiven, when the honesty of their intentions is proved by time. Nothing but a fault of policy on the part of the king will render the power of the Assembly dangerous to his person or allotted authority."

"Allotted authority!" cried Euphrosine, indignantly. "Fault of policy!—Tell me what error you find in the conduct of Louis XVI., unless that he has treated his subjects with the tenderness of a father rather than with the firmness of a king?"*

"Let us not dispute a political question which fills the country with dissension and disgrace," said Valazy. "For the good of France, I trust the king has few subjects so blindly devoted to hereditary despotism as yourself;—for his own—that he may find many adherents as faithful—many friends as disinterested. Trusting, meanwhile, that the friends who engross my anxieties will consent to leave this distracted kingdom, and my poor mother follow the objects of her affection, I have resolved to resign my commission, and abandon a realm in whose existing government I entertain no confidence,—in whose feeble and vacillating monarch I dare not place my trust."

"And yet you call yourself a faithful citizen! You, who would withdraw your aid from the sinking vessel of the state, because you judge its pilot insufficient to its safety!"

"Incapable of affording an advantageous support on either side, I withdraw till contending factions shall have raved themselves to rest; and France re-assume an aspect promising the peaceful formation of a new community."

"Cold—heartless—unmanly resolution!" cried Euphrosine, with flashing eyes. "I had thought better of you, Camille Valazy, than to believe you would shelter yourself under the assumption of moderation, from the terrors of an hour of peril involving the best interests of your country."

"Nay, then!" exclaimed Camille Valazy, whose coun-

* Malesherbes.

tenance during this eager apostrophe had been convulsed with indignation ; — “ Learn the truth — the whole truth. My mind — my opinions — my expectations — are centred in the reformed constitution ; — my inward spirit yearns with a fervent love to the emancipation of my fellow-subjects ; — and stood I alone in the world, I would rush into the mêlée, and die in defending the sacred banner of liberty against the hereditary despots by whom it has been degraded, and the sanguinary demagogues whose very touch is pollution. But my heart — Euphrosine — my heart forbids this rash attempt. My heart with an absorbing influence subdues this ardour of my soul. It tells me that banished from the presence, and reprobated by the disapproval of Emiline — I must die ! — that the well-being of my country — the self-approval of my own bosom, would avail me nothing, if the sun which animates my existence were to withhold its rays from my adoration. So long as Emiline de St. Florentin lives to demand my services and deigns to accept them, — no convulsion of the state, — neither ignominy, nor ruin, nor desolation, shall influence my destiny.”

“ Miserable — miserable infatuation ! ” exclaimed Mademoiselle Delplanque. “ And yet,” she continued, wringing her hands, “ how can I presume to blame him for the madness of his devotion ! Farewell, Valazy ! ” cried she, turning abruptly towards him. “ I have learned all I wish to know — I have heard all I wished to hear. I go to pursue my own duties — my own path of patient and humble sacrifice ; and since we may not tread that path together, there is nothing more to unite us to each other. Yet, stay ! ” said she, pausing as she reached the door. “ One word of warning to yourself, before we part. In taking the public step you meditate, forget not that all emigrants absenting themselves from the kingdom after the commencement of the new year, fall under the decree of proscription ; and that any officer abandoning his public functions, without having sent in a resignation of his commission, will be prosecuted under the revolutionary law, *as a common deserter*. — Thus much for public intelligence. For your private ear, know, — and neglect not the pre-

nunciation, — that you will find a deadly and persevering enemy in the Chevalier de Mirepoix.” —

“Impossible!” cried Camille. — “In his youth I was his favourite playmate; and of all the family of Navelles, he alone——”

“I seek no argument on the subject,” said Mademoiselle Delplanque, imperatively. “He loves your Emiline — has loved her, like yourself, from infancy. In process of time, he will demand her widowed hand, and the interests of her family will exact its acceptance.”

“It is but too true!” ejaculated Valazy, reverting to the scene of the hotel of Nivernois; and he shuddered as this new anticipation took possession of his mind. —

“What chance have you of conciliating the prejudices he will naturally strive to excite and foster in the mind of his cousin,—perchance of his bride,—against the cousin of Maximilien Valazy,—against the supposed murderer of her husband?”

Camille involuntarily smote his bosom.

“I will tell you! — Arise! — shake off this lethargy! — When your bodily strength shall be restored, strive to achieve the restoration of your energies. Then, Camille Valazy, declare yourself for the cause she loves. Advocate it in the Assembly, — bleed for it in the field! You have youth — means — money — influence. — If, as it is said, to compass the liberation of a land it is necessary only that she should desire to be free, in a national crisis such as the present hour, those who desire and deserve to distinguish themselves, will not lack the opportunity.”

“But tell me, I beseech you,” exclaimed Camille. He spoke in vain. — Euphrosine had left the chamber; and his weakness forbid him to follow her departing footsteps. He felt, as he had often felt before after an interview with this strange and exalted being, — depreciated in his own esteem, — mortified and vexed, both with himself and her. — And when Toinon sulked into the room at bed-time, with his evening potion of orange-flower water, he was almost as well inclined to expatiate upon the boorishness and sauciness of the young Picard who had come upon them and disappeared again with the vivacity of a flash of lightning, as either Lison or her zealous son.

CHAPTER IV.

When, ever yet, was your appeal denied ?
 Wherein have you been galled by the king ?
 What peer hath been suborned to grate on you ?
 That you should seal this lawless bloody book
 Of forged rebellion with a seal divine,
 And consecrate commotion's civil edge ? *Henry II. Part II.*

“ AND pray who is the *Muscadin* from whom you received so indignant a glance just now ? ” inquired the Deputy Couthon of Maximilien Valazy, with whom he was traversing arm in arm the garden of the Tuileries.

“ Yonder flimsy thing, skirting the paths beside the basin, with so deliberate a step, — as if to catch a glance of his empty countenance by reflection on its waters ? — ’Tis Mirepoix, next heir to the family of Navelles ; one of the aristocratic silk-worms, whose existence is too closely enwoven in its own dainty tissues, to perceive aught that is passing in the external world. — What is it to them that the poor are worn to the bone by privation and labour ; — that the lowly are beaten with the heavy rods of oppression.

silk-worm feels not — sees not — hears not. — Our silk-worm is safely nested in the centre of his selfish cocoon ! ”

“ Ta, ta ! ” cried Couthon with a malignant sneer. “ Keep your eloquence, Max, for the club to-night, or the Assembly to-morrow. It is wasteful to lavish those good round periods on a friend — on a friend who knows you, too. It were as well, however, if this Mirepoix of yours were to provide himself with a new suit ; for his button-hole of decoration gapes with a most melancholy yawn for the order we have wrested thence.” —

“ Nay ! such is his insolent vanity ! I doubt not he has amused himself by inserting his snuff-box into the gash, in order to widen its vacuum, and proclaim himself to all the world an ex-chevalier.”

“ And now I think of it, surely this was the jackanapes

who was pleased to set forth to Mirabeau, in one of his ebullitions of chuckling jocularity, that *you*, Valazy, invariably chose me as your companion, in order that my crooked back might enhance the grace of your Herculean outline?"—

"Psha! are the impertinences of such a thing worthy recollection?—Had he injured me by no worse blow than a lick of the tongue, I might have satisfied myself, by returning the favour. But the officious puppy has placed himself between me and vengeance. When I was appointed, at my own request, one of the commissioners for the domiciliary visit to the Hôtel St. Florentin on the night of Louis's escape, and had flattered myself of finding an occasion to repay to Emiline de St. Florentin some of the courtesies for which I was formerly indebted to Emiline de Navelles, yonder Marplot was beforehand with me;—had conducted her with her children to her doting father's seat at Florincethun;—and I found myself—ay! Couthon, prepare one of those grim sneers you reserve for the mischances of your friends,—I found myself compelled to a state-service, for which I had little appetite!—Instead of seeing that pretty doll weep and tremble at my feet, as I anticipated, I had the curse of soiling my fingers by routing through files of mouldy papers; and of burning them afterwards, while affixing the seals of the nation on every old chest calling itself the property of St. Florentin.—An edifying occupation truly, for any thing beyond the condition of a notary's half-starved clerk!"—

• "And then to have the certainty that the very silk-worm which so moves your choler was honoured with the satisfaction of destroying your handy-work so shortly afterwards! After all, it was but a pusillanimous piece of work on the part of the Assembly, to pardon all the busy knaves and fools who had lent a helping hand to the insolent attempt of the 21st of June."—

"Nay, the amnesty was granted in gratitude for the blundering manner in which their officious counsellors settled the affair. Had they carried off their wooden idols to some secure shrine,—had they found safety for the royal gang in a huckster's cart, instead of provoking recog-

nition by their own pompous paraphernalia, then might the rogues have slept a head shorter by this time, — and the limbs of the treacherous *gardes du corps* hung in dismembered warning from every guard-house of the city. As it was, even the *poissardes* were ashamed to hoot at the sneaking blockheads as they sat, on their entrance into Paris, chained in front of the royal carriage which they had not found wit or valour to rescue from the friends of the national cause. — Pardon them? — Methinks the curs should have shared their part of the decreed recompense, by which the Assembly has paid the trouble and zeal of the thief-takers of Varennes and St. Ménéhould.”

“ Pethion swears that Barnave passed the time of his journey from Varennes to Paris in maundering speeches of gallantry to Madame Elizabeth.”

“ And Barnave protests that when they refreshed themselves *en route*, his two colleagues picked their chicken bones to the very beard of the king, and made the Austrian herself fill up their bumpers! — For my part, I have only to regret in the business that the sword of an honest revolutionist should have performed an office on the insolent St. Florentin, which I had designed for ——”

“ Your own hand? ” —

“ The keener edge of the guillotine! — And that the same sluggish weapon did not more wisely direct its efforts, by suppressing a little of the superfluous vitality of the Valazy family, in the person of my pluckless cousin, the merchant of Lyons.” —

“ Was he not wounded in a death struggle with St. Florentin? ”

“ There were no witnesses to the affray; and dead men blab not. — Camille, dull as he is, has had the art to justify himself to his general. But even if the fact were proved, to *my* good thinking the blow was struck in advancement of his personal predilections, — in pursuance of his personal enmities, — not in any zeal for the cause of the nation, or the liberation of his enslaved countrymen. — No, no, Camille Valazy was not born of the stuff that makes a patriot.”

“ Yet you recommended him to the general? ” —

"For my own ends. — Know we not that who is not with us must be against us? However, I have kept my conscience clear, by warning La Fayette to place no further trust in his services."

"Right! Family attachments must not operate against the interests of the commonweal." —

"Yet that stately piece of armoury, who has as much sentiment in his heart as lies in the old buff coat of Gustavus Adolphus, had the grace to inform me that *he* would be answerable for the good dispositions of his aide-de-camp. — *He* answerable to *me* for the principles of a beggar who was nourished upon my father's bread, and sheltered under my father's roof-tree!" —

"Just one of his qualifying phrases, — of his attempts at moderation. But here is Danton posting away from the palace with a grin as expressive of loathing as if he had been swallowing some of Ræderer's taunts, or some of his own dirty words. — *Touche la mon brave!* — What are they doing to-day in the Assembly — and what saying in yonder mob, from which you have just escaped? It seems to have stationed itself under the windows of the château, as country boobies stand gazing, in some provincial fair, at the encaged hyenas and panthers growling through the bars of their dungeon."

"*Parbleu!* that is just what they say! I heard an old tinker muttering to his greasy friend the cobbler, that the Assembly had resolved to keep the Bourbons in a den for life, as a band of wolves in reserve to be loosed upon the people in case of disaffection." —

"They must talk and think, truly, — the dirty ruffians!" —

"*Mort de ma vie!*" exclaimed Couthon, with a grimace which purported to be jocose; "methinks our good friend Valazy relapses from time to time into something of the phrase of the aristocrats. — After all, Danton's tinker was but one of the hereditary princes of the sovereignty of the people; and what becomes of the freedom of the republic, if you seal the grumbling mouths of the cobblers with their own wax?" —

"The superfluous population of Paris will be the

permanent obstacle to a French republic," said Danton, ferociously. "The loss of a little blood would relieve its plethora. As Barrère* observed to me last night, — when we chanced to cross a congregation of the banditti of the Faubourg St. Antoine gathered together by some cheering news just arrived of the triumphs of their black fellow-miscreants at St. Domingo, — 'The overgrown populace of Paris, gathering round the seat of government, is like a determination of blood to the human heart; the vital organs are oppressed by suffocation, while the rest of the body becomes withered and enfeebled.' " —

"Ay, ay," observed Couthon, malignantly "Were Danton and Barrère charged with the regeneration of the constitution, — instead of the mitred head and cloven foot from Autun, and the renegade Alexandre Lameth with his mouldy refuse of courtly compliments and congees, — they would teach the social organ to beat freely, and lop off the gangrened integuments without remorse. — They would 'kill — kill — kill' from mere ferocity; even as you and I, — for the gratification of our personal animosities."

"Wait till you see St. Just and his plausible, canting friend Robespierre, wielding the weapon of destiny, — I am much mistaken if the scales of justice will not then be filled with somewhat more than a pound of human flesh."

"So my *fainéant* of a cousin once predicted to me! Camille Valazy asserts that the Revolution, like Saturn, will devour its own children."

"It has not yet satiated its hunger upon those of other people! Even if the king should refuse to accept the new constitution (and they say La Fayette has had some difficulty in forcing the peevish child to swallow his medicine), I see little chance of cementing the glorious pile of the Revolution with the only permanent medium, — the blood of its enemies, — till the amended organisation of the National Guard shall have rendered to each legion its independent command, and snatched the scourge from the hands of so doubtful a patriot as La Fayette. Till that scrupulous old woman, Bailly, shall have atoned his treachery towards the people, nothing effectual will be done.

* Historical

We may expunge the feudal laws of the aristocracy, — we may shrivel in the flames the horrible scroll of the *lettre de cachet*, — we may level the walls of prisons and cloisters, — we may equalise the revenues of posts of state, — we may enfranchise the land from oppressive taxes, both ecclesiastical and secular ; — but so long as those hands have life and motion which built up or repaired the Gothic fabric of the ancient monarchy, new Bastilles will arise, and new Polignacs deride in their hour of triumph the moans of the trampled wretches in whose person the rights of man have been invaded. Unless the thorns be heard to crackle in the fire, we shall again be exposed to their infliction ; — unless this vain and profligate court be decimated of its evil-doers, our children and our children's children will see the halls of Versailles glorified anew by the detested splendour of their former abominations.” —

Danton paused, exhausted by his own vehemence. But Couthon did not venture to deride *his* eloquence, or question the veracity of *his* intentions. He was known to be in earnest ; — he had proved himself bold, enterprising, and persevering in the pursuance of measures which the majority of his party were readier in concocting and making the theme of their tumid declamations, than in furthering with heart and hand. Bred to the profession of the law, he knew the vulnerable points of the civil edifice ; and his mode of attack was skilful and determined. Scorning the speculative theories of political regeneration, he was willing to go all lengths with the fiercest demagogues of the rabble ; and enforce the new order of things by that demoniacal defiance of every law, divine and human, which filled the ice-house of Avignon with dead, and defiled the waves of the Loire with livid corpses ! —

Meanwhile, the condition of the illustrious inmates of the palace of the Tuileries, which had now assumed the character of a gloomy and dishonoured prison, rather than of a royal abode of the descendants of Henri IV., were overwhelmed with indignities and provocations. La Fayette, so severely visited by the populace on occasion of the flight to Varennes, that a lamp-post was prepared on the Place de Grève for his instant execution, redoubled his vigilant

precautions for the safe detention of the royal family ; either to mislead the opinions of his adversaries as to his real intentions and feelings towards the king, or in truth to prevent all possibility of future escape ; while Gouvion, the second in command of the National Guard, was permanently stationed in the palace,—a measure far from unwelcome to their majesties, who believed him to be devoted to their persons. But he refused to retain so responsible a duty as that of his service at the Tuileries, unless permitted to wall up several doors of communication affording facilities to escape ; and unless two officers of the National Guard were established in the antechamber of the queen. The courts of the château were filled with national troops, —a species of camp was pitched in the gardens immediately facing the Tuileries ;—sentinels were placed on the very roof ;—and, by the command of La Fayette, not even the deputies were permitted access to the palace ! —

The precautions within doors were even more minute, and far more offensive. The officers intrusted with the personal guardianship of Marie Antoinette, had the privilege of remaining in her chamber by night as by day ; and notwithstanding the remonstrance addressed by the king on this head to General La Fayette, the only modification obtained was a permission that while her majesty slept, they should withdraw from her apartment. Even this concession was a nominal relief ; for they were compelled to remain in the thickness of the wall between the double doors of her bed-chamber, with the inner entrance ajar.—

One night, the queen, wearied by the vexations of the day, (for it was that which witnessed the election of Pethion as mayor of Paris, a man for whom the queen entertained a personal disgust, which had been materially aggravated by the coarseness of his insinuations, and insolence of his demeanour during the miserable days she passed in his company on her return from Varennes,) had retired to rest at an earlier hour than usual ; in that chamber which, though stripped of all its gorgeous decorations and splendid attendance, was still to be regarded as a sacred retreat, as the asylum of an innocent and broken-hearted woman, a mother, and a queen ! — No regal plumage now

waved above its canopy,—no gewgaws glittered around.—But the spot was consecrated by tears of penitence, and prayers of Christian humility!—Feverish and dejected, she found it impossible to close her eyes. Having lighted a lamp left by her attendants for her use, she prepared herself to pass the night in reading;—but scarcely had she cast her eyes upon the book which lay on the coverlid, when she perceived the figure of a man traverse the room and approach her bed.

Marie Antoinette was startled rather than surprised or alarmed by this apparition.—She had become so well inured to insult and danger, that her mind was prepared for the aspect of death at any moment, in any shape, and her patience armed to cope with every fresh outrage offered to her feelings, either as a queen or as a woman. But when the young soldier,—for by the light of her night-lamp flashing on his accoutrements, she perceived that this uncourteous intruder was, in fact, one of her guards,—threw himself upon his knees beside her couch, seized her hand, and covered it with passionate kisses,—she trembled with terror and indignation! The vehemence of her emotion was, however, quickly subdued.—On withdrawing her hand from the eager grasp of the national soldier, she perceived that it was wet with tears; and felt, with an instantaneous conviction from such a circumstance, that as a woman she had nothing to apprehend, and as the wife of Louis XVI., much to hope, from the tenderness of her janitor.—

“Alas! madam,” said the young man, flinging back the sable curls from a brow of the purest whiteness, and speaking in the most subdued tone, “you do not deign to recognise me!”—

Marie Antoinette, disengaging herself, threw the glare of her lamp on his face. “Euphrosine! my poor, dear, faithful girl!” she faltered,—imprinting a maternal kiss upon that fair forehead, while Mademoiselle Delplanque could only reply to these acts of graciousness, by tears of joy.

“Since the day you deserted us so suddenly, my child, we have borne with much sorrow!” said the queen,—“yet

think not that your former devoted services were forgotten. Deeply did I grieve to find from Bertin that you and yours had endured molestation for our sake, and that she could procure no tidings of your present welfare. Trust me, my good girl, I have never experienced the want of a trustworthy and affectionate agent, without murmuring a selfish desire that Euphrosine Delplanque were still near me, and still inclined to peril her personal ease and safety in my behalf.”—

“Surely, surely, madam, that last reservation was superfluous!”—said Euphrosine, reproachfully.

“Nay!” said the queen, “forgive the mistrust of a princess who has been betrayed by those in whose veins circulates the same royal blood which warms her own;—a woman, whose summer friends have migrated from the nest they professed to love so fondly.”—

“Judge not the subjects of your ancient and loyal kingdom from a few graceless individuals!”—exclaimed Euphrosine, with spirit. “The best and most honourable hearts in France still beat, madam, to do you service; and thousands of swords would gladly leap from their scabbards at your majesty’s bidding.”—

“Hush, hush!” said the queen, faintly smiling. “This is a language I had almost forgotten,—which it were well for me I had never heard,—which I must henceforward labour to forget.—Such were the delusive phrases which inflated my youthful vanity at Schönbrunn; such the accents which cherished the pride of my maturity at Versailles.—When I arrived in France, I was greeted with such fond partiality, that I believed the flatterers who told me the kingdom was my own by the predilection of the people,—my children’s, by the divine right of inheritance!”

“And so it was,—and so will it be again!”—

“Never, Euphrosine,—never, never! Where were the swords which should have leaped from their scabbards, when I was driven from my bed at Versailles by the intrusion of ruffians,—exposed as a common mockery to the rabble,—conveyed in open captivity to Paris,—surrounded by the lowest of miscreants,—and heart-stricken by the spectacle of the bleeding bodies of my faithful guards?—Where were

my friends, my partisans, my knights, when I was forbidden by the mob to bestow on my children the blameless enjoyment of breathing the summer air in the groves of St. Cloud? Where were they when, arrested like a fugitive thief on my way to throw myself into the protection of subjects more faithful than the misgoverned tools of the capital, I was brought back a prisoner to this palace of misfortunes? — Which of the courtiers of the Trianon rushed hither to receive the afflicted daughter of the Empress of Germany? — Noailles, my avowed enemy, — the Duc d'Aiguillon, with his louring glances of detestation, — presented themselves to usher me into my regal dungeon; — while it was to the interposition of the republican Barnave that I owed the preservation of my poor faithful *gardes du corps* from the fury of the intoxicated mob! — Such, Euphrosine, such is the chivalry of France! —

“Yet, Heaven forgive me!” she suddenly exclaimed, as if by a recoil on herself — “Why should I desire to find them otherwise? — The misfortunes they must encounter in a cause so foredoomed as that of the sovereignty of the Bourbons, would only aggravate my afflictions. What did I not suffer, when my good, my gallant St. Florentin paid the penalty of his persevering devotion to his sovereign? — When Choiseul, Damas, Goguelas, were dragged to prison, for their efforts in our behalf! — You have been yourself too deeply in our secrets, Euphrosine, not to know with what ardour I implored my beloved friend, Madame de Polignac, and her family, to quit the kingdom.”

“And it was to my own hands, madam, you deigned to intrust the commission of requiring Madame de Lamballe to seek safety in England.”

“Trust me, Euphrosine, it was to those who call themselves my *partisans*, I addressed my reproach; — not to that knot of beloved friends who are even now hazarding their safety for my sake. You will find me surrounded by many who were wont to charm your affectionate heart by their kindness and protection. Madame de Tourzel, Thibaut, La Brice, our good Campan, still fulfil their official duties at the Tuileries; but who among them, Euphrosine,

—who among them has served me with a disinterested and enthusiastic constancy like your own? ”—

Again Mademoiselle Delplanque imprinted a kiss on the gracious hand extended towards her. “Your majesty vouchsafes to over-rate the value of a feeble reed devoted to your support.”

“A few more such reeds, my poor child, would afford a prop effective as the most gigantic oak! — A few more such loyal votaries would replace me and my children,— I will not say upon the throne of France,—that day is past, nor do I further covet a distinction so cruelly degraded,— but *in safety*, Euphrosine; — in safety, beyond that mighty river which severs the honest hearts of Germany from the sanguinary rebels of France.” —

“But will his majesty again consent to ——”

“His majesty’s consent to such a measure would not be *asked* by servants who truly loved him. He should be carried off a prisoner to a more peaceful country.”

“Such was the scheme which the opinion delivered by General La Fayette to the Assembly, on the 22d of June, appears to suggest.”

“La Fayette is—but I leave it to time and to posterity to develop the mysteries of his character,” observed the queen, hastily checking herself. “No!—Heaven knows I have no further craving that my husband or my son should reign over France!”

“I beseech you, madam, do not, even in your just indignation, blaspheme our beautiful and fertile country,” cried Euphrosine.

“The glorious realms of the East produce the most terrific monsters of the universe,” observed the queen.

“Hush, madam,” cried Euphrosine Delplanque, eagerly covering the lips of her sovereign with her small fair hand. —“My companion has retired into the dressing cabinet.— We are, I trust, secure from observation;—but I am indebted for his confederacy to pecuniary considerations, not to the impulse of kindness or loyalty;—and how can we confide in the fidelity which has been purchased by a bribe? —Restrain, therefore, I beseech your majesty, this vehemence of expression.”

"Good girl!"—said Marie Antoinette, with moistened eyes; "your head is no less valuable than your heart. Where—where did you acquire this nobleness of sentiment?"

"From the inspiration of the Almighty spirit by which it was fashioned, and the sublime religion bestowed on me by his mercy!" replied Euphrosine, with haughty humility.

"Yet methinks that souls as lofty," said the queen, with somewhat of an ironical smile, "have been vilely tamed and alloyed by too prolonged a sojourn among the servile crew besetting my antechambers! I remember," said the queen, insensibly carried back to the recollection of those scenes and moments,— "I remember, Euphrosine, as if it were yesterday, the first occasion of our meeting.—I was still but the dauphiness of France.—Nor had I yet learned to love the land which has since so sternly repaid my partiality;—for, alas! I was still doubtful of the affection of my husband—still childless!—One day, having ventured to express the isolation of my heart, and its regrets for the cheerful simple German home in which, unmolested by those forms of etiquette unnecessary to maintain the innate dignity of the imperial crown,—our good Madame Thibaut—was it not? led to my feet a little fairy girl—a lovely, gentle, sportive creature, some three years old;—and told me, that one such pledge offered on my part to the French nation, would bind me by indissoluble bonds to its interests."

Mademoiselle Delplanque listened with gratified tenderness to the gracious reminiscences of the unfortunate princess; to whom an hour of unrestrained colloquial intercourse was now an almost prohibited indulgence; and as she noted the clear blue eyes glancing beneath her disordered night-dress, and the arm of marble whiteness, appearing under the laced ruffles of her sleeve, it seemed impossible that a being so lovely and so feminine, could provoke the severities of mankind.

"I forget by what bribe I won the good graces of that little Euphrosine!—My bonbonnière, or some other bauble, so worked upon her gratitude, that when I begged her of

her mother who was waiting in my antechamber, and had been, if I mistake not, attached before her marriage to the royal household,—the child clung to me, and asked leave to stay with the kind lady whose robe glittered so like sunshine.”—

“ And did my poor mother presume, madam, to deny the request of her future sovereign ? ” inquired Euphrosine.

“ No ! she *denied* me nothing. But she sealed her consent with so many tears, that I withdrew my petition ; and grateful for my sympathy with her maternal feelings, she told me that her own experience had taught her to dread the influence of the delusions of a court on the destiny of her child. ‘ Suffer me,’ said she, ‘ to educate my daughter to love and serve you in an humble home ; where she will be secure from seductions which might hereafter tend to render her love and service valueless in the eyes of your majesty.’ — I consented readily, and readily did I believe her, Euphrosine ;—for good faith was painted in your mother’s countenance.—But I did not dream that her instructions would bring forth such good fruit from the little plant I had so wished to naturalise in my garden.—No ! I did not dream that Marie Antoinette of France would live to rely on that dark-haired child of Versailles, as on one of the most trustworthy of her followers ! ”

“ Would, madam,” said Mademoiselle Delplanque, with tears streaming down her cheeks, “ would that circumstances had rendered my assiduity unnoticeable ! — Far better, that the loyalty of your adherents should have concealed my devoted affection amid the mighty crowd, than that the desertion of others should render my poor assistance so ostensible.—But you spoke of escape—of expatriation.—May I presume to ask whether your majesty still entertains a hope of leaving this corrupted land ? ” —

“ No ! Euphrosine, I have taken up my cross, prepared for the last extremity. The king,—resolved to die at his post, and repair by the firmness of his fortitude in misfortune, the misplaced leniency with which he suffered the ruffians of the Revolution to raise themselves to his level, that they might depress him to theirs,—will sanction no further revolutionary measures. Taught to regard the

haughty obstinacy of Charles of England as a political error, my husband has essayed under similar trials the power of conciliation and gentleness;—has acted as a guardian angel, where the harshness of an avenger was doubly requisite. But abased as he has been by the factious and the wicked, I trust and believe the king will never consent to abdicate the crown, whose brightest jewels have been ravished before his eyes; but which he regards as a sacred deposit to be transmitted to his children and their posterity.”

“But their present safety, madam—the safety of your majesties?”

“Euphrosine!” said the queen, raising herself upon her elbow, and speaking with grave solemnity—“That crown will never recover, in the eyes of the French nation, the sacred stability with which it was formerly invested in the opinion of our subjects!—A time will come—mark me, child! a time will come, when the royal authority of France will be placed as absolutely at the disposal of a majority of voices in the popular representation, as the mere premiership of the ministry of St. James’s!”—

Mademoiselle Delplanque cared little to inquire into such probabilities; she was a Bourbonist,—not a royalist— not a politician; and was more interested for the safety of the royal family than for the establishment of the purest form of Utopian government which ever haunted the dreams of prince or statesman.

“Then less than ever, madam, must its possession appear precious in your sight. Surely——”

“*Precious*, Euphrosine?—Held on its present terms of tenure, the diadem of France is a degradation to the brow of a daughter of the Imperial House of Hapsburg.—Were my own will—my own preference—paramount on this occasion,—I would surrender it into the rude hands by which it has been dishonoured, and seek refuge in the love of my Austrian fellow-countrymen.—My brother would not deny me the shelter of some obscure corner of his dominions. But not to subsist on his benevolence.—No!—The wife or widow of a Bourbon would scorn to nourish her humiliated existence saving on the labour of her own hands. The mother of a dauphin—the descendant of

Henri IV.—would shrink from receiving alms from any foreign state !”

While uttering these afflicting expressions, which seemed the involuntary apostrophe of a breaking heart, Marie Antoinette burst into an agony of tears ; and it was some time before the tender soothing of Euphroisine restored her to composure. “ Alas ! madam,” whispered the weeping girl, “ I cannot bear to witness these emotions, which proceed from too long—too compulsory—a repression of your sentiments.—I cannot bear to see you suffering thus—for I must speedily quit your side. The night passes, and I must return to share the guard of my companion !” —

“ And you have not yet informed me, my poor child, by what strange accident you have found your way hither.—Your father——”

“ Trusting that the motive may excuse the unbecoming boldness of my action, I have presumed to secure access to your majesty, by enrolling myself as a substitute in the National Guard, under the feigned name of Jacquot Lavoine, of the section of the Filles St. Thomas !”

“ Thank Heaven !” involuntarily ejaculated the queen. “ You have thus secured me an unfailing medium of communication with my friends,—an unceasing source of consolation for my loneliness.—Tell me, when shall you be again on guard ?” —

“ But, once more, madam, within the week.—But, hark ! I hear footsteps in the antechamber,” faltered Euphroisine, rising from her knees, and gliding towards the door ; which, without presuming to utter another word of farewell, she gently opened.

As she disappeared from the bed-chamber of her majesty, Mademoiselle Delplanque pressed her hand to her heart, in token of a reverential but silent adieu. But a rude struggle in the anteroom convinced the unfortunate queen that their interview had been watched and betrayed !—

CHAPTER V.

A heavier task could not have been imposed,
 Than I to speak my griefs unspeakable. *Comedy of Errors.*

ONE of the first cares of Camille Valazy,—on arriving at Paris, where his return was greeted with the warmest delight by his brother officers and comrades to whom he had been represented as having fallen in a popular tumult at Stenay,—was to seek out the abode of Mademoiselle Delplanque, to replace in her hands the sum of thirty thousand francs, which had been deposited with him through her interference, previous to the expedition to Varennes, and which he no longer understood the means of devoting to the service of the king and queen. But he was unsuccessful in his search. The mansion of old Delplanque in the Marais, was already inhabited by a strange tenant; and neither the successor to his *mercerie*, nor any other person, appeared at all aware that Euphrosine had absented herself from Arras, where her father was said to be established with his family.

His next effort was to seek an audience of Madame de St. Florentin.—Not that he expected to derive either pleasure or gratification from such an interview. He still retained a cruel recollection of her demeanour towards him on occasion of their last meeting; and the fact that she was now freed from her marriage-obligations appeared, if possible, to render her still more difficult of approach. He had, however, a painful duty to fulfil towards her; for the dying commands of St. Florentin left him no alternative but that of personally placing in her hands the last bequest of her husband.

On presenting himself at the gates of Florincthun, Valazy was informed that no person even of their nearest friends, had access to the Duc de Navelles or the Marquise de St. Florentin, except the Chevalier de Mirepoix. He desired to be admitted to Monsieur Laporte; and the

horror and disgust with which the old man recoiled from his approach, justified this precaution.—At Florinethun, Camille Valazy was still execrated as the murderer of St. Florentin !—

The ring and handwriting of the marquis, however, were evidences of his innocence, too authentic to be doubted; and when the poor old steward became satisfied that the wasted figure and cadaverous countenance of the young captain were the fruit of his exertions in favour of the king and queen and in defence of his late master, he fell upon his neck and wept aloud !—

But though Valazy persuaded himself he had learned to look on Emiline without emotion, and witness the tears of her widowed sorrow without sympathy, when her consent was obtained, and he found himself on the point of an interview, he grew speechless and almost breathless with agitation. Laporte, naturally attributing his distress to the mournful object of the solicited audience and the enfeebled condition of his young friend, lent him an arm till he found himself in the chamber of Madame de St. Florentin, and within a few paces of her chair.

But he was mistaken in anticipating on this occasion any renewal of her former haughtiness. Emiline, forewarned by her old domestic of the motive of his visit and the misrepresentations by which he had been calumniated, was touched to the very heart by the discovery of his exertions in defence of her beloved,—as well as by consciousness of the groundless rancour she had cherished towards the child of her good Madelon. When Valazy entered the room, she was in tears; and on finding him by her side, she threw herself by a sudden impulse into his arms as into those of a brother! Hiding her head in his bosom, she wept without measure or restraint; while Laporte sobbed aloud at the spectacle of her uncontrollable distress.—

For all the kingdoms of the earth, Camille could not have uttered a word of consolation to the beautiful being in whose arms he was thus strangely enfolded. But as soon as he could disengage her from her position, he replaced her on her chair; and kneeling before her, without raising his eyes to her face, placed in her hand her husband's ring and

letter ! — He heard the passionate kisses imprinted by her lips upon these hallowed pledges of affection ;—he listened to the groans which appeared to be wrung out of the very depths of her heart, as she gazed upon the lines traced by that cherished hand now mouldered into dust. He perceived her sighs bursting into the wild convulsed hysteric laugh of agony — yet he could neither speak nor move to her assistance.

“ And you would have saved him for me—my Camille ! — my good brother Camille ! ” she exclaimed. “ You would have rescued him from the ruffians who tore him from his miserable wife, — his unprotected children ! — ay ! even at the risk of your own existence ! ” — and bending towards him, she laid her hand on his head in an attitude of benediction. Camille Valazy felt as if a bolt of ice had shot through his frame. — He was riveted to the spot !

“ Take the blessing of the widow and the orphan,” cried Emiline. “ Take the thanks of a miserable woman, bereft of all protection — all earthly hope — all earthly happiness. — How often, how fervently do I wish that my children and myself had passed through our hour of sacrifice, and were lying in the lonely grave of my poor lost St. Florentin — ”

“ Despond not thus, madame la marquise,” interrupted poor old Laporte. “ Deign to remember that you have still faithful followers and devoted friends, bound to the protection of yourself and your sweet babes by the holiest ties of gratitude.”

“ Alas ! ” said Madame de St. Florentin with more composure, “ *who* among the nobility of France can now venture to rely upon the fidelity of their dependents, or the guardianship of their friends ? — *Who* can feel secure that a violent death will not precipitate them into a dishonoured grave ? — I have no one now to defend my cause. — My father’s decrepitude renders him a cause of additional anxiety to myself, rather than an efficient protection. — My kinsman, the Chevalier de Mirepoix, is too young and too enthusiastic to be intrusted with my confidence. Yourself, Laporte — with all your devotion — all your goodness, — are now too

feeble to fight for the cause of your master's house. — I am utterly — utterly abandoned !”

“ Not so, madam !” said Valazy, affecting a composure of mien, which the tremulous uncertainty of his voice sufficed to contradict. “ You have deigned to recognise my humble devotion, as evinced in the most terrible crisis of your destiny. Vouchsafe to accept it for yourself — for your children !”

Madame de St. Florentin despondingly waved her head. “ I must,” said she, “ not again involve you in this fatal cause.”

“ What am I but the creature of your bounties !” persisted Camille, without noticing her interruption. “ But for the education bestowed by the Duc de Navelles on my early years, I had been still a senseless clod, lost in the drudgery of Grand Moulin. My present fortunes are your gifts, — the better hopes of my existence have——”

“ No, no !” cried Madame de St. Florentin. “ You do not deceive me by these flatteries. Your own energy, your own steadiness and perseverance, have rendered you what you are : and you have a paramount duty towards yourself and towards your mother, which should prevent your participation in the destinies of a ruined house. Yet think not that I ungraciously reject your kindness. Return to Paris, Camille ! Return to the fulfilment of those duties which have already facilitated your services to me and mine ; and believe, that should an occasion of danger present itself in which the efforts of a friend may prove beneficial to my family, it is *you* on whom I will rely for succour : — it is yourself to whom I will appeal for assistance and consolation ! — Write to my good Madelon. — Tell her, that precious as her doating affection would be to me at this moment, I will not entice her into sharing my wretchedness. Tell her that the home provided for her old age by the attachment of her son is her best and most honourable shelter ; and that my sad presages forewarn me I shall one day claim hospitality at her door, an exile and a fugitive.”

“ Might I presume, madam, to torment you by unwelcome counsels, I would implore you to forestal an event

which the circumstances of the times render but too probable. My mother's abode, cannot, it is true, match with the splendours of Navelles, or the elegance of Florincthun. But the comforts of life are not wanting within its walls ; and would you but consent to anticipate a day of evil and adjourn there in unsuspected security with your children and monsieur le duc, the first moment of returning sunshine might recall you to the more prosperous dwelling of your ancestors !"

" Alas ! Camille," said the marchioness, " I once rejected an offer of similar kindness upon your part, under the influence of a perverse and jealous waywardness. But I am not wayward now !" she continued, looking down on her weeds, and by an irresistible impulse, snatching her husband's letter from her bosom and covering it with kisses. " It has pleased Heaven by its chastisements to prove to me the instability of the happiest human conditions, and subdue my wilful spirit. But it may not be, Valazy !—My father, who has borne threescore years of worldly dignity and respect, is of an age past the schooling of the times. Even did he acknowledge the necessity of yielding to their devastating torrent, his chivalrous sense of honour would forbid him to resign one iota of the privileges of his caste. My father, feeble as he is, would rather die at his post, than seek safety in flight."

" I do not speak of emigration," said Camille. " I do not presume to counsel that the Duc de Navelles should, during the absence of his son, set foot upon a foreign territory."

" When the first symptoms of a revolutionary spirit became apparent," observed Emiline, " my brother, whose feeble health has prolonged his stay in the south of Italy beyond the period stipulated by the governor to whom his education was intrusted, was on the point of returning home ; and my father, by procuring for him an honourable situation at Versailles, entertained hopes of subduing that turbulence of spirit and devotion to the new school of philosophy, which increase our uneasiness on Amédée's account."

" I was not aware that the Comte de Navelles had be-

trayed any dereliction from the established principles of his family," said Valazy, respectfully.

"It was our business to conceal a fact so unsatisfactory. But no sooner was the Duc de Navelles aware of the progress made throughout all ranks of society in France by the doctrines of the new school, than he framed his pecuniary engagements with my brother in such a manner, as to preclude all possibility of his return from Italy. Amédée is consequently upon the list of proscription; and were my father to determine on emigration, the estates which have been confirmed to our family by five hundred years of stainless nobility, would become confiscated to this mockery of a state which we have suffered to extend its fulminating sceptre over our heads."

"Yet surely, madam, the retainment of a few disaffected fiefs is not sufficiently alluring to bribe you to the encounter of death—nay, perhaps of more than death?"

"Heaven knows that it is not!" cried Madame de St. Florentin, clasping her hands. "For my *own* part, the poorest cottage in some obscure and unmolested land, with my children around me and my good Madelon sharing my exultation in their infantine beauty, their growing intelligence,—would be to me a happier home than the proudest palace of a realm whose tumults recall to my heart the destiny of my murdered husband. But my father has more disinterested views. He feels that public example should derive its lesson from the highest class. My father will not quit his post at the menaces of a factious populace. And now, Camille, farewell;—for he cannot support my temporary absence from his side. Leave your address with Laporte, that we may be prepared to seek assistance at the hands of so kind a friend."

She placed her own in that of Valazy, as she passed him to quit the room; but instead of venturing to receive it as a pledge of grateful affection, he raised it coldly and reverentially to his lips, as though the act of graciousness of a sovereign princess.

The conversation which ensued with the old steward of the Duc de Navelles left on the mind of Camille a conviction that the family at Florinethun had every thing to

fear from the unrelenting virulence of Maximilien ; and that the state of infirmity into which the old duke had recently fallen, was such as to render his removal from Florinethun both difficult and dangerous. Of Euphroisine Delplanque, Laporte could give no certain intelligence. Not having presented herself at Meaux on her return from Boisgélín, the old man trusted and believed she had returned to the protection of her father. He spoke of her with affection, as of a lovely and promising child ; but predicted that her enthusiastic defiance to the opinion of the world would expose her to irretrievable misfortunes.

On returning to Paris after this interview, Camille felt gratified on every point it had tended to elucidate, excepting this latter doubt. His heart misgave him that had Euphroisine finally deserted the capital and her loyal projects and principles, she would have taken measures to acquaint him with her change of resolution, enabling him to restore to its legitimate owner the deposit she had placed in his hands. But he dared not pursue his researches, lest he might direct official notice towards her movements ; neither could he bring himself to make inquiries on the subject by letter, either of his mother or of Monsieur Delplanque, lest he should renew in their minds the erroneous suspicion they had formerly entertained of his attachment to Euphroisine.

Meantime it became necessary for Camille to decide his line of conduct. Previous to his convalescence and return from Boisgélín, General la Fayette had resigned the command of the National Guard, which for the future was to pass successively into the hands of the commanders of its several divisions. After a farewell address to its assembled legions, he had even quitted Paris, and taken up his residence in Auvergne, his native province ; — affecting to believe, or believing, that the main purposes of the Revolution were already achieved by the establishment of a liberal constitution ; and that the struggle of the preceding seven-and-twenty months had closed with honour to himself, security to the nation, and unlimited submission on the part of the court of Versailles.

Previous to his departure, the city of Paris had issued

commands that a medal should be struck in his honour ; and presented him with a statue of Washington, the model of his own conduct and career, and a sword forged from an iron bar of the Bastille. He was followed in his retreat by the affection and confidence of the people, whose enthusiasm he had never attempted to mislead, and between whom and the royalist party he had mediated with the moderation of a generous but Christian spirit. It was understood that the partisans of La Fayette entertained a hope of recalling him to the administration of public affairs, by proposing his election as Mayor of Paris, on the resignation of Bailly. But this object was thwarted by the reliance placed on the ultra-republicanism of Pethion : — the court and the party interested in forwarding a counter-revolution flattering themselves that the excesses promoted by this exaggerated and violent politician would materially second the interests of their cause.

But though by the dismemberment of La Fayette's *état major*, Camille found himself absolved from his engagements, he no sooner presented himself at the head-quarters of the National Guard, than the second regiment of cavalry of the section of the Arsenal to which he had been temporarily attached, fixed its choice upon him as its captain ; and he became once more included in the ranks of the national army. On reconsideration of the honours thus bestowed upon him, he was satisfied that, compelled to remain in the capital, nothing but an official authority of this description would secure him from the suspicion and denouncement of Maximilien's Jacobin associates, and enable him to offer material protection to Madame de St. Florentin and her family.

But if, in the course of the spirit-stirring scenes in which Camille Valazy had recently been an actor, he had learned to reproach himself with his own inertness and alienation from the great interests of his country still perilled before his eyes, his present responsibility filled him with misgivings and vexation. " I have now," said he, as he traversed his solitary apartment, on his return from the Hôtel de Ville, " placed my services at the disposal of a government in which I have no confidence, and may be

called to uphold the execution of measures I abhor. Am I justified in thus trifling with the interests of a mighty nation, to serve my own selfish purpose? — Am I right to close my ears against the suggestions of my better reason, to abandon myself to the promptings of one ungovernable passion? — Yet wherefore not? — The auspicious moment is still distant, when my aid may be commanded by persons in whose hands the destinies of France can be securely deposited; and if, in the interval, my intervention can allay the intemperance of the irritated multitude and soften the destiny of a single sufferer, surely I may stand excused for extending my exertions to the protection of a suffering woman, and of a family to which the services of my forefathers were devoted for centuries by the mutual bond of the feudal charter."

It was in vain that, on his return to Paris, Valazy attempted to assume the social habits with which the youthful friends he had formed during his military career beguiled the vexations of a period so inimical to the pleasures of their age. To avoid the character of a morose misanthropist, he occasionally visited with them the public haunts of dissipation still frequented and followed; for though the gallery of the National Assembly attracted crowds of women of high condition, who interrupted the most important debates, ay, even those affecting the life and death of their fellow-citizens, by the clamour of their giddy laughter and flippant pleasantries, the theatres of Paris were still regularly attended. — Even during the horrors of the Reign of Terror, the curtain of the Opera rose and fell at its usual hour, for the benefit of spectators displaying more than their usual hilarity; and the stones of that highway which had been traversed in the morning by the fatal cart conveying the young, the good, and the noble, to the scene of deliberate bloodshed, were crowded at night by elegant equipages, bearing the fair and frivolous Parisians to a region of public amusement! — With their ears yet wringing with the shrieks of wives torn from their husbands, — children from their parents, — they turned aside to weep for the painted Iphigenia, ranting beneath the sacrificial knife; and sealed

their eyes to the sublime appeal of Malesherbes, that they might listen to the inflated ravings of a modern tragedy!—

CHAPTER VI.

They bid you
 Deliver up the crown! and on your head
 Denounce the widow's tears, the orphan's cries,
 The dead man's blood, the pining maiden's groans,
 For fathers, brothers, and betrothed lovers,
 That shall be swallowed in this controversy.

Henry V.

THE recent widowhood of Madame de St. Florentin and the unceasing attendance exacted by the infirm condition of the Duc de Navelles, exonerated her from all necessity of intercourse with the illustrious prisoners of the Tuileries; — for in no other light could they be further regarded. But Emiline, — though her heart was involuntarily chilled towards a cause which had cost her so dear without being itself benefited by the sacrifice, — could not, even in the midst of her afflictions, withhold her sympathy from the royal friend whom she had loved, — the queen whom she had delighted to honour.

Shortly after the disastrous expedition to Varennes, Marie Antoinette, in spite of the vigilance by which she was surrounded, contrived to convey to the widow of the devoted St. Florentin, a short billet expressive of her unqualified sympathy in the event rendering Emiline a widow, and her infants fatherless. But it appeared to the delicate and feeling Madame de St. Florentin, that the letter was too royally worded for so affecting an occasion: — that it spoke too much of future protection, where the mere tenderness of gratitude was required. She knew that, throughout her connection with the circle of the château, she had not only been undistinguished by the benefits profusely lavished upon others, but had been enabled to grant

favours, and afford obligations, to the several members of the royal family. Nor could she bear to suppose that the sovereigns she had served and revered estimated the loss of a husband and a father,—a being so gifted and so beloved as her martyred St. Florentin,—as capable of indemnification by worldly benefits. The position of their majesties, was, however, too calamitous to permit her to nourish one feeling of displeasure towards them.

Vainly did she despatch Laporte to the city, with a charge to penetrate into the interior of the château, and assure himself by personal inquiry of the attendants of her majesty, that her health had not materially suffered under the trials and mortifications to which she had been subjected. The old man returned to Florinethun with intelligence that all communication between the court and the city was suspended. But he acquainted the marchioness, that he had recommended the execution of her commands to the Capitaine Valazy; who, in consideration of her anxiety, had undertaken to profit by the facilities of his official situation, and assure himself by personal investigation that the unfortunate inmates of the Tuileries enjoyed the respect and deferential attendance so much their due.

The spring of 1792 was passed by the illustrious prisoners in a series of mortifications and injurious privations. Every successive measure of the Legislative Assembly appeared to aggravate the humiliations of the king, and open a still wider gulf between the tottering throne of the Bourbons, and the people who still affected to retain the name of their subjects. The religious institutions of France were disorganised,—the priesthood disavowed,—the sacerdotal habit proscribed; while, at the instigation of Dumouriez, war was declared against the new Emperor of Germany, the nephew of Marie Antoinette.

By a decree of the Assembly, the royal guard was now disbanded. Notwithstanding the virulent manifestation of animosity against Louis XVI. which had long been apparent, his person was left at the mercy of the miscreants of Paris, recently excited to their utmost pitch of violence by the dismissal of their three favourite ministers—

Servan, Roland, and Clavières ; a measure noticed in the Assembly by a vote of disapprobation on the part of the Girondists. The only defence for the king against the operations of this mighty horde of enemies consisted in the good-will of a few battalions of the National Guard, which might have been still excited to rally round his standard, and vindicate its rights against the ruffians of the Faubourgs St. Antoine and St. Marceau. But, alas ! no effort was made on the part of their sovereign to re-animate their loyalty.—His majesty's habits of life displayed the unmanly inertness characterising a Roman pontiff, rather than a descendant of the brave Béarnois ; and Louis XVI., instead of teaching the Parisians in the words of Henri IV. to rally round his *panache blanche*,¹ on public occasions he appeared in a carriage, like an old or infirm man, nor had he once deigned to grace with his presence a review of the national troops. In his present helpless and defenceless condition, it is not wonderful that the royal family was subjected to new insults on the part of the populace.

On the 20th of June,—the anniversary of their flight from Paris,—a mob of insurgents of the lowest class, headed by a democrat of the Faubourg St. Antoine, the brewer Santerre, and accompanied by flags and standards bearing the most monstrous inscriptions, burst into the palace of the Tuileries ; the National Guard, disbanded the preceding year and scarcely knowing whom to regard as its commandant, affording little or no resistance to their progress. Upwards of twenty thousand ruffians were suffered to introduce themselves into the very presence of the unfortunate king ; who, judging it better for the sake of his unprotected family to submit with patience to the degradations imposed on him by the populace, so thoroughly disarmed by his meekness their rage against his person, that the insurgents, having been exhorted to quit the Tuileries by their favourite Pethion the new mayor of Paris, the assemblage of barbarians consented to disperse without further violence ; and before night, the courts of the château were cleared of the last stragglers of the insurgent party.

But this eventful day, though ending without the com-

pletion of the crime for which its measures had been concerted,—the annihilation of the royal family,—afforded the finishing stroke to the destruction of the monarchy!—A mob which had beheld the King of France compelled to bow to its insults—ay! even to stoop to the adoption of the *bonnet rouge*, the emblem of its defiance to the laws of his realm,—could never again be expected to renew its worship at the foot of an idol whose altars it had trampled in the dust. From that period, the existence of Louis XVI. became a toy for the sport of his revolted subjects. It was in vain that the Duc de Liancourt invited him to fly to Rouen, and place himself at the head of a few devoted regiments,—which, with the united inhabitants of La Vendée, might serve to turn the tide in his favour. It was in vain that La Fayette flew to Paris, from his head quarters at Sedan, and implored the royal family to accept his escort to Compiègne, where he undertook to surround them with the defence of the constitutional army. The king, mistrusting the loyalty of his intentions, refused to owe his safety to an advocate of the sovereignty of the people.

By this ineffectual tender of service to Louis XVI., meanwhile; and his address to the National Assembly against the excesses of the 20th of June, La Fayette forfeited his last claim on the affections of the mob. The once popular commander of the national army had the mortification of seeing his effigy burned, with yells of triumph, in all the public squares of the city; and of knowing that the citizens, whom he had believed devoted to his person, betrayed utter indifference to his degradation, and to the progress of national revolt. A second federation now took place in the Champ de Mars; when the king renewed his oath of fidelity to the constitution, and in some degree assuaged the tumult of the insurgents; but they were speedily rekindled by the publication of a manifesto on the part of the royalist army at Coblenz, by the Duke of Brunswick,—containing menaces the most injurious to the honour of the French nation.

These fresh discontents, fomented by the efforts of the Jacobins and the injudicious proclamations of the army on

the frontier, were soon united into a focus of mischief. On the 8th of August, Pethion proceeded to accuse Louis XVI. at the bar of the Assembly, of having conspired against the people ; and on the following day, Ræderer the syndic of the department proclaimed that a general insurrection was on the point of breaking out. Yet notwithstanding this acknowledgment on the part of the authorities, no sufficient precautions were adopted. Early on the fatal 10th, the tocsin sounded the signal of revolt ; when the king, after having undertaken the defence of the château, and assigned the posts of the troops allotted for his protection, appeared for the last time in the balcony of the great court of the Tuileries. A faint cry of "*Vive le Roi!*" was raised at his presence ; but his majesty was known to place almost as much confidence in the national soldiers assembled on that occasion as in his faithful Swiss.

On this memorable occasion was Valazy favoured by a first opportunity of proving his devotion to the wishes of his noble foster-sister. Previous to his return from Boisgelin, La Fayette, on resigning the command of the National Guard and retiring to his head-quarters at Sedan as a general of division, had diminished his état major, so that the post of Camille was necessarily abolished ; while the feebleness incidental to his wound and long indisposition afforded him, on his arrival in Paris, a fair pretext for declining a further appointment in the general's staff. He received, however, from his hand, an official testimonial of his services ; and Valazy observed that La Fayette, during their brief and formal interview, never once alluded to the disaster of Varennes,—to the commission he had himself received on that occasion,—or to the St. Florentin family.

La Fayette did not part from his young aide-de-camp with this ungracious reserve of official taciturnity.—“ I conclude,” said he, “ that your connections and residence at Paris, Captain Valazy, incline you to fulfil in the capital the functions and duties of a citizen. I shall rejoice to hear, sir, that the sacred persons of their majesties are guarded by one on whose fidelity I can repose my eager anxiety for their safety and happiness ; and venture to recommend that my young friend should enrol himself in the

battalion of the Faubourg St. Marceau, commanded by the worthy Acloque — whose sentiments I believe to assimilate with our own. I am not, Monsieur Valazy, so ignorant of what is passing in the city or of the characters of those with whom I surround myself, as to be unaware of the reserve you have maintained in your connections with your kinsman the deputy, — a brilliant and attractive, but dangerous companion. Cherish this honourable prudence, sir. — Pursue your temperate, but upright course. — It will be the better with you and all whom you desire to serve.”

Satisfied of the good intentions of the general towards himself, however he might distrust his sentiments on political points, Camille not only followed his advice by joining a corps which contained many of his former friends and associates, but had reason to believe, from the prompt cordiality evinced towards him by his new commander, that Acloque had received some private recommendation from La Fayette. On several important occasions, the command of the grenadiers stationed at the Tuileries was appointed to him, in defiance of the regular routine of service ; and it having proved his good fortune, in the attack of the 20th of June, to divert the point of a pike directed against the king, he was honoured by the private thanks and public notice of Acloque ; who, profoundly touched during that eventful day by the patient humility of Louis, had formed the most eager hopes to defend him throughout all extremities. In his ranks he boasted many private soldiers wearing the Cross of St. Louis ; and all the inferior members of the royal household proceeded to enrol themselves either in the troop of the section of the Filles de St. Thomas, or in the battalion of Acloque.

On the fatal morning of the 10th of August, the populace, having insisted on the withdrawal of Mandat from the command of the day, Valazy, whose name rendered him an unsuspected person with the mob, was proposed by Acloque to undertake the guard of the royal staircase, kept by the Swiss guards. It was a post of no mean importance ; and had been deserted by two companies of National Guards of the section of the Feuillans ; but Camille, to whom the safety of the king appeared an eminently sacred

deposit, felt that his person was secure so long as the staircases of the château were guarded by brave and loyal defence against the approach of the populace. He beheld without alarm the arrival of two deputations ; one from the departments, and another from the municipality, — who claimed access to Louis XVI., for the fulfilment of a peaceful mission. But on observing that the former was headed by Ræderer, his heart misgave him of some unfortunate result.

Scarcely had an hour elapsed after their arrival, when his majesty, followed by Marie Antoinette and her lovely sister-in-law Madame Elizabeth, appeared at the head of the stairs. An instant rumour in the hall proclaimed that the king and queen, instigated by the representations of Ræderer and his colleagues, were about to throw themselves on the protection of the National Assembly ! On this announcement, the warm hearts of their adherents, which but a moment before had beat with the hope of labouring and perhaps dying in their defence, experienced a general chill of despondency ; for though it was generally acknowledged that his majesty had been influenced by the desire of preventing a further effusion of blood, it seemed an act of fatal concession to abandon his post at such a crisis. Once resigned to the power of the Assembly, the destinies of the royal family of France were indeed gloomy ! —

At that moment, however, no one anticipated the full extent of the evil. The voice of the syndic was heard from the antechamber of the guards, imploring the royal suite and grenadiers of the Filles St. Thomas, to refrain from accompanying their royal master ; assuring them that such an evidence of distrust would infuriate the exasperated populace assembled in the gardens of the Tuileries, and endanger the safety of the king ; and Camille, eager to ascertain the effect of this plausible harangue, fixed his eyes anxiously upon the stairs, and beheld the royal family advance with slow and hesitating steps, amid cries of “ *Vive la Nation !* ” “ *Vive Pethion !* ” “ *A bas Monsieur et Madame Vêto !* ” distinctly audible among the yells of the mob posted in the courts of the palace.

The aspect of the queen had already assumed the calm-

ness of despair ! Except when she occasionally turned round to assure herself that she was closely followed by Mesdames de Lamballe and de Tourzel, and the bed-chamber women conducting her children, it was evident that she was almost insensible to the objects by which she was surrounded. — She felt that she was descending for the last time, those stairs which she had so often mounted with the triumphant levity of happiness, youth, beauty, and prosperity ; — that those halls which she had rendered the resort of the gay and the noble, — which she so often filled with joyous strains and thrilling hearts, — were about to resound with the groans of murdered victims, and to be strewn with the insensible corpses of her faithful followers ; — that a hopeless darkness had gathered round her head ; — that “ her glory was departed from her ! ” — And as Valazy gazed with upturned and mournful eyes on her gradually descending figure, he saw her suddenly pause midway upon the stairs, and motion back the crowd of attendants which pressed on her steps, while she hastily threw on every familiar object around her a look of such unutterable anguish as woke in his own heart an overwhelming sense of personal commiseration !

At the foot of the stairs, the crowd — no longer repelled by the divinity which is said to hedge a king — rushed forwards to catch a last glimpse of the humiliated Louis, with so bold a defiance of the decency due to anointed sovereigns even in their downfall, that Marie Antoinette lost sight of the dauphin. As she passed the spot where Valazy stood with presented arms to do a last homage to the Queen of France, Marie Antoinette, remembering the sea of fierce and menacing countenances she had just contemplated, in that hall wont to exhibit only a confusion of waving plumes, jewelled garments, and smiling faces, — pressed her hands upon her bosom, while a half-suppressed cry of terror and anxiety for the fate of her beloved child, burst from her lips ! —

The blood of Valazy curdled within him at this intense expression of maternal agony. In the afflicted Marie Antoinette, he no longer beheld the queen of his native country, the daughter of an emperor. — He saw only the

friend of Emiline de St. Florentin, — he heard only the murmur of a suffering woman ; and though he had received no orders to justify him in accompanying the royal cortège to the Feuillans, on perceiving that Madame de Tourzel, — the lady to whom the dauphin had been intrusted, — was incapacitated by terror from fulfilling her duties, he did not hesitate to place himself by her side, and follow in the royal train.

On reaching the terrace leading through the gardens of the Tuileries to the hall of the Assembly, the armed multitude stationed there through the night, crowded on the royal party with such insulting invectives and menacing postures, that the deputies experienced great difficulty in the preservation of the king and queen ; when Camille, satisfied of the personal danger of the young prince, snatched him from the arms of his conductress, and bore him aloft in his arms above the heads of the populace ! After striving and struggling with the human torrent pouring towards the corridor of the Feuillans, he experienced the satisfaction of placing the child in safety in the arms of the agonised mother ; who, having missed the dauphin, had believed him sacrificed by the fiends, whose imprecations still seemed ringing through her ears.

“ My son ! ” she exclaimed, — “ my son, my dear unhappy child, — salute your brave preserver ! ” — But Camille, having fulfilled this precious duty, had already rushed from the spot, and was stemming the tide of the blaspheming and implacable multitude, on his way back to the palace ; while Louis XVI., received by a deputation at the door of the Assembly, took his seat at the left hand of the president, and announced to the members and galleries, his trust to find safety for his family among the representatives of the nation.

As a first instance of the insults premeditated against the royal family, it was now voted that, by the terms of the constitution, the Assembly could not proceed to its deliberations in their presence ; and they were accordingly confined in the box of the logograph, or reporter of debates, situated behind the chair of the president. From time to time, witnesses were produced at the bar to give

evidence of the progress of affairs at the palace, — now in the hands of the rebels : witnesses belonging to the lowest class of the Jacobins, — begrimed with smoke, and the blood of their fellow-subjects ! It has even been said that these miscreants were adorned, as trophies of victory, with portions of the flesh of the murdered Swiss guard ! *

Before the close of that terrible day, Louis XVI. was destined to sanction, by his presence, a decree suspending him from his royal functions, and originating the conventional form of government afterwards imposed upon the nation. One only step remained towards the total obliteration of the monarchy, — the captivity of the royal family ; and they were accordingly remanded from the Feuillans to that antechamber of death, — **THE TEMPLE**, — under the charge of the municipality of Paris !

Meanwhile scenes of unparalleled atrocity proceeded at the Tuileries. The first object which struck the eyes of Valazy on his return were the mangled bodies of Suleau and Vigier, grenadiers of the guard, carried upon the pikes of the insurgents. The Marseillois had already directed the cannon on the palace ; and having made themselves masters of the gates, were engaged in butchering the unfortunate Swiss guards, with pikes formed of the iron railings torn up from the gardens of the Tuileries. While forcing, sword in hand, his way to the hall of the palace, Camille perceived that the stairs he had recently quitted were encumbered with heaps of dead ; over which, without remorse or concern, a crowd of rapacious monsters fiercely trampled their way to the pillage of the state apartments. The atmosphere was oppressive from the repeated discharge of musketry, — the roar of cannon in the courts without, added to the confusion of the scene ; when a lurid light suddenly flashed through the windows, and a cry that the palace was on fire, startled the barbarians engaged in pursuit of plunder in the upper chambers.

It would perhaps be difficult to depict a scene of greater horror than that rendered terrifically apparent by the rising flames of the offices in a state of conflagration. The hall, vestibule, the stairs, were choked with bodies of the slain ; and the granite flags discoloured in places by streams of

* Weber's Memoirs.

blood dispersed by the footsteps of the assailants. Notwithstanding the alarm that the progress of the conflagration would spread from the outhouses in the quadrangle to the *corps de logis*, hundreds of half intoxicated wretches, who had been busied in the pillage of the cellars, continued to rush blindly towards the state apartments ; partly urged by the sight of their more fortunate comrades groping their way among the corpses of the Swiss, and guarding from observation some splendid fragment of the decorations of her majesty's apartments ; — and partly by the ferocious desire to assist in the horrible task appropriated by the fishwomen and market porters, of stripping and mutilating the bodies of the guards and royal suite, and throwing them from the windows for the diversion of the cannibals in triumphant possession of the court below.

Acloque and the *élite* of his companions having been withdrawn to guard the avenues of the Feuillans, Valazy perceived with dismay that the national troops, terrified by the sight of the palpitating bodies of their companions borne aloft on the pikes of the Marseillois, had joined the standard of the assailants. To struggle singly against this triumphant body of inebriated monsters, would have been madness ; and on hearing around him joyful anticipations of the arrival of the remaining battalion of the Swiss guards from Courbevoie, uttered by the wretches by whom they were predestined to slaughter, he resolved to avoid the spectacle of a massacre, which it was as impossible to prevent as to force back the waves of the stormy ocean, by eluding the scene of bloodshed. The royal family and their suite were for the present in safety ; and he was anxious to join the detachment of Acloque on the terrace, where his aid must be acceptable to the guardians of the public peace.

To escape from this scene of sanguinary intemperance was no easy matter. The mob, shouting and rioting in the madness of their triumph, were not to be blinded by the mask of a national uniform to the air of disgust and alienation visible on the countenance of several officers of the National Guard, who presumed to remonstrate against the atrocity of their proceedings.

“Who is this *freluquet*?” — they exclaimed, as Valazy, affecting the breathless impatience of some official errand, attempted to struggle through the groups of miscreants by which the courts were beset.

“If thou hast drawn that sword of thine in the cause of the nation,” cried a being only distinguishable as a female by the long dishevelled locks which gave her the air of a fury, as she sat mounted across one of the pieces of ordnance planted against the château, “why has not the blade won some honest gilding to-day from the blood of the Swiss minions?”

“Bah!” cried one of her companions, who was decorated with strips of black and scarlet cloth, in token of having assisted in the murder of the guards and suite of Louis; “’tis one of La Fayette’s *modérés*! — Methinks it were well to turn his soul on the wrong side*, that honest men might learn of what washy materials these semi-patriots are composed. The bodies of one or two such *fainéants* would be a grateful offering on the funeral pile which must consume those of our murdered confraternity — the brave destroyers of the Bastille!”

“Peace!” cried an amazon by her side, who with pistols stuck in her girdle, a drawn sabre in her hand, and her face defiled by traces of blood and smoke, had evidently been actively engaged in the massacres of the day; “think you the ashes of the patriots would mix with those of a pitiful *lâche* such as this?”

“Give him a sugar-plumb from thy trigger, Théroigne!” — cried a voice from the mob. And Valazy, in the person of the fury before him, immediately recognised the notorious Théroigne de Méricourt, whom he had recently beheld instigating the slaughter of Sulcau and Vigier, and who now drew a pistol from her belt, and levelled it at his head.

“Hold!” cried another voice from the crowd. “This is no sneaking royalist, but a good patriot like ourselves. — ’Tis Valazy, brother to our worthy deputy; — the same

* *Flanquer l’âme à l’envers* — one of the terrible modes of popular expression.

who marked his respect for the nation by easing the task of *le bonhomme* Samson*, and cutting the throat of the Austrian's favourite — St. Florentin !”

The unqualified refutation of such a charge which now burst from the lips of Camille, would have infallibly assured his instant immolation, had not the loud cries which rose on all sides around him, of “*Vive Valazy! — Vive l'ennemi des aristocrats!*” — drowned his incautious self-exculpation.

“ Let him go, let him pass,—he is bound on an errand to the Assembly !” cried the same voice ; and he was immediately allowed a free passage through the crowd.

Pursued by the yells of these misguided wretches, the groans of the murdered soldiers, and the wild shrieks of persons escaping from the conflagration of the offices, Valazy, finding it impossible to reach the terrace, made his way through the streets towards the guard-house of his section. The shops were partially closed in those adjoining the Place Vendôme, which were filled by the mob of Federates returning from their attack upon the château. But in the more remote streets, the business of the day was proceeding, and apparently with tranquillity and satisfaction. He heard nothing but cries of gratulation, and beheld none but smiling countenances ! — A moment's consideration sufficed to remind him that the partisans of the royalist party were compelled to retreat into their dwellings ; and that the well-disposed majority of the community was mourning, in the saddened seclusion of their domestic circles, the new and horrible crimes daily polluting the records of their native land.

* The executioner of Paris.

CHAPTER VII.

Some kinds of baseness
 Are nobly undergone This my mean task
 Would be to me heavy as odious ; but
 The mistress whom I serve quickens what's dead,
 And makes my labours pleasures. *The Tempest.*

It was to be expected that public outrages thus triumphantly achieved, should be followed by a total subversion of civil government. One of the first measures of the newly-elected executive council of which Roland was the ostensible chief, was to annul the committee of the different sections of Paris, and suspend the justices of peace from their functions. The état majors of the gendarmerie were disbanded. Santerre, the sanguinary democrat of the Faubourg St. Antoine, was appointed to the chief command of the National Guard ; and every successive decree of the Assembly appeared designed to assure the progress of discord. Sanctioned by the character of Pethion's administration in the city, the populace was suffered to follow up the riots of the 10th of August, by solemnising a public funeral for their comrades fallen in the attack upon the Tuileries, and by the destruction of every public monument wearing the attributes of royalty.

The statues of the former kings of France, even to that beloved sovereign,

Qui fut de ses sujets le vainqueur et le père,

were broken into fragments by the factious multitude ; while the ambassadors from the various courts of Europe, relieved from their missions by the deposition and imprisonment of Louis XVI., hastened to quit a city given over to the licentious misgovernment of the worst of factions.

Meanwhile Valazy, distracted between the shame of wearing an uniform dishonoured by participation in the crimes of the 10th of August, and the dread of resigning all claim to a distinction so important to the protection of the friends he loved, waited with impatience to learn the

part assumed by La Fayette in a crisis of so much moment to his country. It was his hope that the military influence possessed by the general would be exerted so as to enable him to march upon Paris; and maintain the constitution of which he had been the main originator, and the illustrious family to whose qualified rule he had declared himself a loyal subject. But La Fayette had suffered the critical hour of his popularity to pass, without striking so decisive a blow as might render him the permanent prop of the constitutional monarchy of France. Though actuated by honourable intentions and a sincere desire for the liberty of the land, he had no firmness to support the lofty character of his political views. He had been unable to retain the reins at one moment grasped within his hands; and the furious steed she had undertaken to restrain, had not only overturned and broken in pieces the chariot of the state, but had left their luckless charioteer far behind them on their course.

On the 19th of August it became known in the capital that La Fayette,—having vainly harangued the troops assembled at his head-quarters at Sedan against the administration of the Jacobins and the authors of the massacre of the fatal 10th,—had the mortification to perceive the total extinction of his authority with the constitutional army, which had transferred its affection, and allegiance to the bold and ambitious Dumouriez, who eagerly renewed the oath entitled “Liberty and Equality,” exacted by the commissioners despatched to his brigade by the Assembly; while La Fayette replied to their proposals by arresting them and raising the standard of revolt. Disavowed in this step by the officers under his command, the municipality of Sedan, and authorities of the department of the Ardennes,—he was compelled to seek safety in flight; and, accompanied by Latour Maubourg, Bureau de Puzy, and Alexandre Lameth, quitted a land abandoned to the control of Danton, Murat, Robespierre, Pethion, and the regicide faction of the Cordeliers. On reaching the Austrian outposts, they were publicly arrested as prisoners of war!

This intelligence, and the rumour circulated among his

companions in arms of an intended re-organisation of the National Guard of Paris by its new general, the demagogue brewer Santerre, determined Valazy to retire from a post in which he must become, through his connection with the staff of La Fayette, a suspected person. There were certain prudential measures, however, to be observed in retreating from any national employment; and Camille, whose princely fortune and personal interests formed too important a stake to be petulantly hazarded, was deliberating upon the safest pretext for his resignation, when his chamber was suddenly entered by the good old Laporte.

"No unsatisfactory news I trust from Florinethun?" exclaimed Camille, after greeting the venerable man with filial deference, and seating him affectionately by his side.

"At present none, Monsieur Camille," replied the intendant with a mournful air. "My poor old master's infirm state of body and mind precludes all necessity for communicating to him the disastrous intelligence of the degradation of his sovereign. And yet I sometimes think, sir, it might be better to acquaint him at once with the true state of public affairs;—which would either bring down his grey hairs in sorrow to the grave unoutraged and undishonoured, or determine him to quit this fated country. I scarcely dare reflect upon the destiny reserved for his helpless daughter and her unprotected family, by remaining in the vicinity of Paris! But it was not upon that point, sir, I came to consult you."

"You are safe from interruption here," observed Camille, perceiving that Laporte hesitated to explain himself, and kept throwing suspicious glances round the apartment. "We are secure from observation here. My servants are out of hearing, and I can rely upon their fidelity."

"Your servants?—observed the old intendant, with an unconscious air of irritation; for it was the noble accommodation of Camille's habitation which had distracted his attention, and provoked his vexation. "Well, well! no matter—times are changed!—The good king is a captive,—the Comte Amédée a proscribed exile,—the Marquis de St. Florentin——no matter!—Why do I talk of this!—it was of other grievances I came to speak!"

Valazy, towards whom in his childhood the old steward had ever assumed the tenderness of paternal partiality, maintained a forbearing silence, to give him time to recover his composure. At length, he could no longer repress his uneasiness — “The marchioness — the children — are well?” —

“My honoured lady is as well as the distracted state of her mind will admit. But new misfortunes crowd upon her, — new afflictions menace her. — “Have you not heard,” he continued, lowering his voice to a confidential pitch of caution; — “have you heard that our dear chevalier accompanied their majesties to the Temple?” —

“The Chevalier de Mirepoix? — His fidelity does him honour.”

“Honour?” cried the old man impatiently; “the time is lost for prating of honour in France. What has a nation of cut-throats and *sans-culottes* to do with the virtues of chivalry?”

“Laporte!” interrupted Camille, alarmed by his vehemence.

“’Tis your own fault, if I am incautious; you told me you could answer for the fidelity of *your servants*.”

“I can, — I do!” cried Valazy, with a heightened complexion; “but be just and reasonable. Refrain from confounding the crimes of a lawless mob, with the sentiments entertained by the enlightened portion of the community.”

“Enlightened — enlightened, — what has come of their enlightenment? — What has it done, but guide them to the commission of excesses, such as —”

“It has guided them to the emancipation of the *tiers état*,” cried Camille, somewhat touched in temper, by the vexatious contempt of the old man; “an achievement of which the social benefits will remain, when this temporary state of popular excitement shall have subsided.”

“*Tiers état!* — *Canaille!* — who ever heard of its existence during the prosperity of the monarchy?” —

Valazy involuntarily smiled. “At least acknowledge, my good old friend, that your former reproaches to me, — your former angry charges against General La Fayette, — are satisfactorily answered. — Rather than yield the frontier to

an enemy, or maintain it under the authority of the Jacobins, he has fled the country !”

“ Ay !” as the incendiary abandons the ruined pile he has consigned to destruction ! But a truce to these discussions ! — You cannot expect, Monsieur Valazy, that a greybeard like myself can march with the new order of things ; or that I — who predicted the future malignancy of the boy Maximilien — and the future ——”

“ Say nothing of the boy Camille !” interrupted Valazy, affecting an air of gaiety ; “ say nothing of him, but that the Laporte, who once loved and protected him, loves him still ; and scorns to resent the chances of destiny, which have so strangely elevated him above the accident of his birth.”

Laporte winced a little at the word *accident*. His feudal prejudices were still strong upon him : but he extended his hand cordially, and grasped that of his former favourite with warm affection. “ But the chevalier !” said he, resuming his consequential air ; “ I came hither, deputed by the marchioness, to acquaint you that her noble kinsman has been removed from his service to his majesty, and imprisoned at La Force. Stay, — I have a billet addressed to you on the subject, by madame le marquise ——”

“ From the marchioness ! — why did you not give it me instantly ?”

Having delivered the deposit to the impatient Camille, he amused himself during his perusal of the note, by gazing leisurely round the apartment, the solid magnificence of which so moved his indignation ; nor could he sufficiently surmount his narrow prejudices, to separate in his mind the association between the fine bronzes and marble consoles of the Capitaine Valazy, and the village patois and costume of his mother, the *bonne* of Mademoiselle de Navelles.

“ Madame la marquise appears warmly interested in the destinies of this gentleman,” said he, refolding the billet and replacing it in his vest.

“ During the absence of Count Amédée, she regards the Chevalier de Mirepoix in the sacred light of her nearest kinsman. His sister, Ma'mselle Léonie is an inmate of Florincthun. The marquis loved the chevalier for his

bold and ardent spirit, — for the frank and generous character which so well became his ancient name.”

The view entertained of the case by Camille was not amended by this suggestion. “It suffices,” said he, sternly, “that my mother’s foster-daughter commands my services in his favour. It is not for me, Monsieur Laporte to inquire her motives of interest in his favour. Assure her of the humble zeal with which I shall address myself to the execution of her charge; and though my interference in behalf of so eminent a royalist will probably draw upon myself the suspicions of my section, I shall regard my safety of poor account, compared with the happiness of marking my devotion to her will.”

“My dear boy,” cried the old man, moved almost to tears by expressions so consonant with his feelings and opinions, “you speak like the child of our good Madelon! — Forgive me, if I seemed just now to grudge or envy your prosperity, Camille:—I find it has wrought no evil on your heart or mind.”

Valazy readily and affectionately accepted the old man’s outstretched hands; and having promised to make such efforts for the enlargement of Mirepoix as circumstances would allow, Laporte took his departure for Florinethun.

“And it is thus she regards the safety of one who shared the sports of her infancy,—of one so dear to the poor fond old woman she affects to cherish with such grateful affection!” exclaimed Camille, slowly pacing the room on Laporte’s departure. “After all, what matters it to such as Emiline, how many plebeian hearts cease to beat in the course of this dreadful struggle, or what streams of ignoble blood are poured in the support of the aristocracy?—I was born for no better purpose than to uphold the dignity of the house of Navelles. She believes me honoured by a commission to encounter the fierce animosity of a jacobinical section, to relieve her anxiety for the fate of one of her knights!—But I have promised—ay, and should promise again were she to demand of me a service thrice as unreasonable, a thousand times more perilous to myself! Well may Maximilien deride the folly of my devotion to a being, who at best endures my sub-

missive homage, even in these hours of danger and degradation ; and who, in the season of her prosperous pride, regarded me as no worthier than the lackey who carried her mantle, and wore the cognisance of her house."

The name of Maximilien, and the recollection of his taunts, served to recall to his mind the only person on whom he could rely for aid touching the imprisonment of the Chevalier de Mirepoix. Though for the last fifteen months he had entertained no social communication with his cousin, when chance necessitated their encounter in the pursuance of his public duties, their recognition was kinsmanlike and friendly. Camille retained sufficient remembrance of his uncle's early kindness towards him, to entertain a degree of interest in the destinies of Maximilien ; and regarding him in the delicate predicament of a debtor, was cautious to moderate, in their outward expression, the feelings of detestation with which he contemplated the principles and conduct of his cousin. Maximilien, on the contrary, felt that the moment of triumph had not yet arrived, which would enable him to display the real character of his feelings towards the merchant of Lyons ; and he was willing to conciliate his patience by a friendly demeanour, so long as the least chance existed of a retrogression of the interests of his own party, or of a claim on the part of his creditor. When speaking of his relative among his Jacobin friends or at the Feuillans, it was his custom to designate Camille as a Fayettist,—a trimmer,—one too cautious to become an overt friend to the embryo republic, and too feeble to be important as an enemy.

But there was another person connected with the personal interests of both cousins, with whom Camille entertained a more familiar intercourse, and upon whom he more relied for aid on the present occasion. During the tedious period of his imprisonment at Boisgelin, and his consideration and re-consideration of the prospects of the Navelles' family and the deadly animosity entertained towards them by Maximilien, he remembered with consternation that the domiciliation of Flavie in the household of Madame de St. Florentin must have initiated her into a thousand facts tending to re-animate the hatred of her lover towards

Emiline. Notwithstanding his abhorrence of the part taken by this misguided woman in furtherance of the schemes of Maximilien, he made it a matter of policy on his return to Paris, to conciliate her good-will by pecuniary liberality,—even to a degree of profuseness, which she did not fail to attribute to his anxiety that she should preserve the secret of his visit to Madame de St. Florentin, on the night of the escape to Varennes. Soothed by the graciousness of his demeanour, so different from that of her brutal protector, as well as by his lavish generosity, she was disposed to forward his wishes. Flavie was, in fact, a vain, frivolous woman, betrayed by folly into vice; but incapable of the malicious wickedness characterising Maximilien Valazy.

Camille, who had once or twice followed up his views of policy regarding her, by visits to her gorgeous abode, was easily recognised by her porter, on presenting himself at her hotel. But he was informed that Mademoiselle Audicourt—the name she had assumed since her dismissal from the establishment of Madame de St. Florentin—was gone with a party of female friends to assist at a debate at the fraternity of the Cordeliers. He resolved to seek her among the audience of this extraordinary society; where it was by no means uncommon for females of the lowest class to interrupt the orations pronounced from the tribune, by dissertations in their own fierce language, and expressive of views and principles assuredly consonant with no other dialect.

Just as he was leaving the porter's lodge, a carriage drove through the gateway; and the loud voices and coarse laughter of its inmates having attracted his notice, he hastened to offer his hand to Mademoiselle Audicourt and her female companion, in whom he recognised the celebrated Desmahis, the beautiful mistress of Barrère. Camille accepted their vociferous invitation to accompany them into the hotel, where he compelled himself to listen to their admiring details of the *séance* of the Cordeliers, and criticisms on the tragedy of Timoléon, at a representation of which they had since assisted in the royal box of the Theatre François! Pausing till they had exhausted their

ridiculous rhapsodies, Valazy at length commenced his appeal to the amiable complaisance of Mademoiselle Audicourt ; and having by this time obtained a tolerable insight into the official habits of the patriots, did not hesitate to offer a specific sum as the price of her assistance.

“ For my part,” replied Flavie, with the most unblushing effrontery, “ I would not refuse your promised recompense, could I in my conscience afford you any hopes of obtaining the liberty of the muscadin Mirepoix. But I can tell you better than any one, the difficulty of procuring his release. Your cousin Max abhors him with the intensity of hatred he so liberally bestows upon every person remotely connected with the old twaddling crew at Navelles. He never forgave you, Camille, for rescuing the proud St. Florentin from his projected retribution, by an honourable death ; and as Count Amédée thinks proper to keep at a respectful distance from the Samsons and the lantern-posts of Paris, — while the superannuated duke remains safe, like an old badger in his hole, at Florincthun, — Max feels that he must for the present perforce content himself with the blood of Reginald de Mirepoix. For my own part, I am somewhat grieved for the plight of the poor young man ; for the chevalier and I have had many a bout at nutting in our old forest, when he used to visit Navelles during his holidays ; and ——”

“ For the sake of early predilections, mademoiselle, surely you will incline yourself to execute my commission ?”

“ That would I, both for your sake and his. For between ourselves, Camille Valazy, those old days are the only ones I suffer myself to look back upon, when I am sitting here alone. But you know your cousin ! — Max would think nothing of grinding my heart into dust, if he discovered my inclination to cross any of his favourite designs. I no more dare intercede with him in favour of a Navelles, or Mirepoix, than of Madame Veto herself ——”

“ But I,” interrupted the Desmahis, “ have no such restrictions on my tongue. Barrère detests the royalists *en masse*. But he does not honour any of them with specific rancour. Your friend here speaks us fairly, Flavie ; and for the consideration he offers, I will undertake to pro-

cure admittance to his friend, that they may arrange some pretext on which to demand his release."

"I did not come empty handed to encroach upon your services, said Valazy, taking from his bosom a pocket-book, containing in assignats the allotted price of her interference.

"Your friend is an honest fellow, Flavie!" cried La Desmahis, whose feminine beauty formed a revolting contrast with the boldness of her air and freedom of her discourse. "Though he affects so much interest in the fate of this pestilent royalist, I believe 'tis a good patriot after all."

"For patriot — I can say but little," said Flavie, as she divided the packet of assignats between herself and her companion. But this I will say for Camille, in spite of the malice which Max delights to charge against him, that for many a long year he has been my true friend; and that in my better days, before I had seen Paris and its sins, — but the season is not good for whimpering, and so we will say no more upon the subject."

"Yes! we will say one word more, if you please," said the friend of Barrère, in a low and cautious voice; "and 'tis one which he will do well to carry away under his belt to a place of safety, and examine at leisure. I had not thought to favour a stranger so far as to enrich him by such a possession; but these winning arguments" — showing the assignats — "and your good word, Flavie, speak volumes in his favour. Know then, sir, that had you suffered your zeal in behalf of your friend to sleep for a week or so, it would have woke too late. The prisons at Paris have been made a depository of all the minions of Versailles — all the Austrian's cringing slaves — all the fierce aristocrats of the ancien régime — only to afford facilities for their extirpation. — A conspiracy is said to exist among them against the friends to republicanism, which will be quelled thus! —" She drew her hand across her throat, to signify the action of the guillotine; and Camille, horror-struck but not surprised by this confidential revelation, gazed with loathing on the beautiful lips which calmly gave utterance to such expressions. Though attired with the most studied elegance, Valazy could not but notice

that Euphrosine, in her masculine garments, possessed an air of womanly reserve far more modest ; and took his leave of Mademoiselle Audicourt and her companion, with an emotion of disgust such as would scarcely have augmented the zeal of their promised services.

But notwithstanding his personal contempt for the Circe from whom he derived his information, Valazy did not withhold his credence from her announcement touching the impending fate of the royalist prisoners. La Desmahis was known to possess unlimited influence over the mind of Barrère. Her house, as well as that of Mademoiselle Audicourt, was the resort of Robespierre, Marat, and the other chiefs of the Cordelier party ; — and the intelligence voluntarily conceded of the evil intentions cherished against the helpless victims trembling in their gripe, materially tended to enhance the value of a document placed in the hands of Valazy on the following morning.

It was a municipal order in proper form for the delivery of “ the body of Reginald de Mirepoix, ex-chevalier, accused of incivism, and detained for having followed Louis Capet and his family to the Feuillans, in defiance of the commands of the procureur syndic.” Within the envelope were a few words exhibiting the grossest defiance of grammar and orthography, requiring Camille to ask no questions, and provoke no observation on the subject of the certificate. “ Seek your friend,” said his adviser, whom he rightly conjectured to be Desmahis herself, — “ seek your friend in the dusk of the evening, — convey him through the barrier in a hackney-coach, — and if you value his life and your own safety, let him hasten beyond the Rhine without further delay. I have discovered that your kinsman, M. V., is likely to prove an implacable enemy to both.”

The information thus conveyed was no matter of surprise to Camille. As regarded himself, or the Chevalier de Mirepoix, it assumed no very appalling character. But on reflecting upon the persecutions in the power of such a wretch towards the widowed daughter of the Duc de Navelles, the hint became a matter of cruel apprehension ; and this renewal of his fears for Emiline almost served to

invalidate the satisfaction with which, towards evening, he prepared to mark his submission to her commands.

"She had me effect the liberation of one who is dear to her," thought Camille, on his way to the Hôtel de la Force, "and I have not even allowed my jealous heart to deliberate upon the motives of her attachment. Madness of affection! — which her own temperate bosom, her own calm measure of mechanical attachment, unfits her to appreciate, — to what infatuated humility and subservience dost thou betray me! — Amid the wreck of national prosperity, I labour but for her sake. — For her I mingle with the blood-thirsty and the oppressors. — For her — renouncing the pleasures of my age, direct my steps to scenes of carnage and desolation; — for her, neglect the duties of filial tenderness, — the overtures of my young companions, — the emotions of patriotic ardour. — And to what end? — That when I am mingled with the dust with which she classes my degraded existence, Emiline may feel that I loved her, — that I served her, — that I died for her, — with a devotedness of heart and soul such as her aristocratic kindred forgot to task in her behalf."

Such was the state of his mind, as he entered the carriage in which he trusted to convey the Chevalier de Mirepoix in safety to the presence of Madame de St. Florentin.

CHAPTER VIII.

A prison is a house of care,
A place where none may thrive,
A touchstone true to try a friend,
A grave for one alive,
Sometimes a place of right,
Sometimes a place of wrong,
Sometimes a place of rogues and thieves,
And honest men among *The Edinburgh Tolbooth.*

"QUINT to a queen?"

"Good."

"Very good! — How fortunate that our worthy Cer-

berus, Le Beau, does not hear me proclaim the excellence of any thing pertaining to female royalty," cried the Chevalier de Mirepoix, who was trying to beguile the tediousness of imprisonment, and the oppression of the small and stifling chamber which he occupied in common with seven other prisoners detained at La Force on charges arising out of the excesses of the 10th of August, by a game of piquet with his relative, the Chevalier de Rhulière. — "Tierce to a knave? — Come! that is somewhat more in our friend Gaoler Le Beau's line of business."

"Good, chevalier, very good."

"Play, then."

"Hark! the evening bell! — they might have spared us that sonata of tintinnabular discord to-night. Not a soul has ventured into the court this rainy afternoon."

"Pardon me! — Lavoine has been stationed since dinner at his usual post under the great plane tree."

"That boy must be in love! I have never once seen him smile since I made part of this honourable community; though, to do justice to my own merits, I am not apt to find my companions preserve an habitual gravity of feature."

"Now you speak of it," said the Comte de Beunouville, another of the prisoners, "I no longer doubt that it is Mircpoix's jokes which have rendered the unlucky lad so melancholy! Ever since you read us your Quatrain at dessert, my dear chevalier, Lavoine has posted himself upon that solitary stone, where he perches like a hawk or osprey from sunrise till sunset."

"By the way," exclaimed Mirepoix, nowise abashed by the reproof of his friend, "we shall be spared the repetition of Le Beau's courtesies this evening. We must content ourselves with the two blood-hounds with whom I presume he has taken the Cerberian oath of '*Egalité et fraternité*;' — or with the ingratiating Madame Le Beau — that gentlest Scylla, whose barking and snarling propensities surpass the united properties of the three!"

"True! he is taking his own turn of interrogation before the National Assembly. Madame Le Beau protested to me, when she visited us to refresh her half-starved

frame with the *fumet* of our soup at dinner-time, that Robespierre and the rest of the Cordelier faction insist upon it we have formed a conspiracy against the administration, here in this lordly palace of ours. — A pretty independent place for a plot ! ”

“ How can you jest on such a topic ? ” observed the Chevalier de Rhulière, gravely. “ Do you not perceive that the object for charging us with supposititious crimes, must be to form a plea for summary punishment ? ”

“ Perhaps that reflection makes poor Lavoine so doleful this evening ! I found him in tears just now, as I passed through the court. ”

“ Chicken-hearted *vagabond* ! — Don’t you know that he belongs to the corps *par excellence* — the lions of the Tuileries, — the grenadiers of the Filles St. Thomas ? — A soldier in tears ! ”

“ Chicken-hearted, or not, ” observed Monsieur de St. Brice, “ I saw him escort Madame Thibaut through the mob of *poissards* on the 10th of August, with a brow wholly unchanged by menaces and imprecations such as might have blanched the cheek of a veteran ; ay ! and with as many muskets directed against his breast as there are leaves on his favourite plane tree. ”

“ As regards Rhulière’s conjecture, ” cried the chevalier, “ of our impending fate, I am well content to close my eyes on a world where perukes have given way to the greasy coiffure of the *bonnet rouge*. Not so much as a *pliant* left for the princesses at the Tuileries, — nor a *tabouret* for our dear duchesses at Versailles ! And I would rather be as dead as Marlbrook, than owe my liberty to a gang of cut-throats, headed by the giant Maximilien Valazy and his pet dwarf Couthon. — But who comes here ? — That was not, after all, the curfew that jangled so harmoniously just now. It was the porter’s bell, who is traversing the court-yard with the turnkeys and their dogs, and a good-looking fellow, whose person seems familiar to me. — Ha ! poor Lavoine ! — the brutes have passed the plane tree, without so much as looking upon him ! — The lad must surely have thought they were bringing an

order for his liberation ; for observe how he stands gazing after them, and wringing his hands."

"Poor fellow ! he will have many a disappointment of this nature to encounter before he finds his way to the right side of the Palais Le Beau. 'Tis strange how earnest an expectation he seems to have formed of his release ! — He sleeps in his uniform, lest he should be summoned away in the night, and ——"

"Hark ! it is *our* chamber they are about to visit. — What can they want at this hour ?"

"We want," said the elder of the two turnkeys, entering the room with a sulky demeanour, "the signature of citizen Reginald Mirepoix, to certify that he was delivered up by our hands to the agent of the Commune of Paris, in obedience to a summons to that effect, signed by Pethion, mayor, — and Barrère, commissioner of public safety."

"Give you joy, — give you joy, chevalier !" cried the voices of his companions ; while Mirepoix, almost stupefied by amazement, gazed upon the fine person of Camille Valazy, who was standing between the two rugged turnkeys, as if to receive him into custody, in a vain attempt to discover the motive of his own deliverance, and the views of his liberator.

"Thanks, — a thousand thanks !" cried Mirepoix, striving to rouse himself. "I trust I may be able to accept the joy you give me, on ascertaining to what end I am thus rescued from this cheerful summer residence ; at present ——"

"At present, sir," hastily interrupted Valazy, "the time presses for your departure. It is almost the hour for closing the prisons."

"Which is as much as to say, that I am about, sir, to become *your* prisoner instead of that of Citoyen Le Beau ?"

"I shall have the honour of conducting you as far as Florinethun," observed Camille, calmly, hoping to discover what effect was produced upon the mind of Mirepoix by this announcement.

"To Florinethun ? — Is it then my sister or my uncle

the duke to whom I am indebted for my enlargement? — Impossible! — the unhappy old man has scarcely discernment left to know the difference between the Hôtel de la Force, and the Hôtel de Navelles. — But my fair cousin, have the goodness, sir, to satisfy me that it was Madame de St. Florentin who interested herself to procure the order of my liberation? ”

“ My commission, monsieur le chevalier, extends no further than to inform you you are free.”

“ Ha! I should surely know that *ton d'Orosmane*? — Surely I address the foster-brother of my cousin Emiline, — one with whom I have played truant before now in the forest of Navelles? ”

“ My name, sir, is Valazy.”

“ For your own sake, I could wish it a better one, young man!” involuntarily exclaimed the Count de Beunouville.

“ But Mirepoix,” inquired Monsieur de Rhulières, “surely you will not, after all, make up your mind to return to Salons without *tabourets* or *plians*? ”

“ Bah! Let me only find myself among your Yankee friends, yonder in Pennsylvania, — who sit upon sugar-casks and rum-punchcons, and never heard the gentle name of highness! — Let me only escape the grim smiles of the ogress Le Beau; and the flavour of *poireaux*, with which our uncivilised *chef* repugnates the suppers of La Force! Do me the justice to believe with what regret I leave you, my good friends, to such fare, and in such company!”

“ *Trêve de cérémonies*! — Only promise me, dear Mirepoix, to see my wife to-morrow, and satisfy her with tidings of my welfare? ”

“ Trust me, — trust me!”

“ And my brother; — prithee, Mirepoix, visit poor Armand, and assure him that I am not cast down, or ill at ease.”

“ My dear Beunouville ——”

“ And little Aglaé de Vaudremont, — carry her this lock of my hair, with an assurance ——”

“ In with you, — *sacré matin*! and without further

ado!" bawled the hoarse voice of the gaoler, who was driving the young grenadier from the court-yard to be locked in with his companions for the night. — "By the mass, Citoyen Valazy, I wish it had pleased you to fetch off this starveling from our perch, instead of the young chevalier there; who, to do him justice, sings while he flaps his wings against the wires. — But this moping owl whines us to death."

Valazy, who was waiting impatiently while the chevalier paused to receive the parting commissions of his friends in misfortune, threw a hurried and careless glance on the new-comer, who was slinking into his accustomed corner. But it sufficed for recognition! — It told him, and with what painful certainty, — that in the person of the prisoner thus reviled, Euphrosine Delplanque stood before him! — While the warm blood rushed betrayingly to his face, and his voice faltered with excess of emotion, he perceived, by a signal of caution on the part of his young friend, that she forbad all expression of personal acknowledgment.

Yet how difficult to repress the exclamations of surprise, sympathy, terror, and regret, with which he gazed on the wasted outline of that beautiful countenance, and the tremulousness of that faltering step! Disease and despair had furrowed her youthful cheeks with strange defeatures; and when she advanced in turn to bid adieu to the Chevalier de Mirepoix, her voice was hoarse with affliction, — yea, hoarse as that which had so eagerly interposed in Camille's behalf in the court-yard of the Tuileries, to pacify the animosity of Théroigne de Méricourt!

Camille could scarcely subdue the conflict of his feelings, on beholding this noble being so cruelly and perilously situated. Gladly would he have devoted to her liberation the interest which Madame de St. Florentin had obliged him to exert in favour of her kinsman; — gladly would he have purchased her freedom by any personal sacrifice; for to leave the young and fair and excellent Euphrosine thus estranged from companionship with her own sex, thus exposed to the habitual conversation of libertines, and the harsh insults of the gaolers of La Force, was a trial of patience almost beyond his fortitude.

"Have *you* no commission, sir, for your friends in the city?" said he, advancing towards her as if prompted by the common graciousness of compassion.

"I have *no* friends," replied she, in the same hoarse tone which had so startled him in the first instance. "Some have abandoned me;—some *I* have abandoned.—I have no friends in Paris."

"You have at least those who are interested to procure your freedom?"

She shook her head mournfully. "The only liberator I look to find, is one which I fancy no partisan of the royal cause,—*the guillotine!* Farewell, sir! Had I indeed a friend, he would think as I do, that Death were my most effectual comforter."

"No, by Heaven!" exclaimed Valazy, seizing and pressing her hand. "You have, I am persuaded, admiring and tender friends, who will leave no effort unattempted for your security."

"Do not waste your eloquence on that mopard!" exclaimed the Comte de Beunouville. "You will do little towards his consolation, unless you bring him a provision of *sucre de pommes*. 'Tis but a peevish homesick boy!"

"Come, come!" said the Chevalier de Rhulières, "we have all a right to cope with our wretchedness in our own way: Lavoine with tears, and a sleepless pillow;—ourselves with piquet and calembourgs!—And now, Mirepoix, if you are wise, be off while the wicket is still open. Do not forget your friends and companions in misfortune; and we will occupy our leisure in praying Heaven to prosper your efforts in our behalf. Above all, acquaint us, if possible, minutely and authentically, with the condition of the royal family."

The Chevalier de Mirepoix, profiting by this suggestion, professed himself ready to accompany Valazy, whose travelling-carriage was waiting at the outer gate; and tore himself from the friendly inhabitants of the little chamber in which he had so impatiently borne his imprisonment, with affected levity and sincere concern. Upon taking his seat beside his companion, and finding himself on the road

to Claye, he had no voice in which to express his self-gratulation or his gratitude for so unlooked-for a deliverance.

But Camille was unconscious of the emotion of the chevalier. He could not drive from his thoughts the piteous smile with which the disguised Euphrosine had marked his departure, or the grievous circumstance of finding her thus situated, — thus surrounded ; — with the miseries of captivity in endurance, and the terrors of an ignominious death in prospect. He was aware that Backmann, the general of the Swiss guards, — Durozoi, the loyal journalist, — and La Porte, the intendant of the civil list, had been beheaded on the preceding day in the Place du Carrousel, — now called the Place Egalité — for their efforts on the 10th of August ; and it was anticipated that few persons having subjected themselves to imprisonment as partisans of the royal cause would escape a similar severity of punishment.

Nor did the accounts of the state of the prison of La Force, as carelessly related to him by the Chevalier de Mirepoix by way of beguiling their journey, tend to relieve his uneasiness ; while his incidental allusions to the despondency and broken constitution of the young grenadier, Lavoine, sank deeply into the heart of Valazy. There was something, indeed, in the character of Euphrosine's loyal devotion, so heroic — so elevated — so touched with unearthly fervour, — that Camille could scarcely persuade himself to believe her subjected to the common casualties or dangers of life. Still, so profoundly was he interested in her unprotected destinies, that he would not hear of passing the night at Florinethun, lest he should lose a single hour that might be improved to her advantage.

It was midnight when they arrived at the château ; and Madame de St. Florentin, unexpectant of so speedy a fulfilment of the commission she had addressed to her foster-brother, had retired to rest. Yet notwithstanding the promise offered as a bribe by Laporte, that madame la marquise would give him an audience at the earliest hour of the morning if he consented to remain, — notwithstanding his fervent anticipation of her gratitude for so diligent a compliance with her request, Camille would have considered

it as a criminal indulgence of selfishness,—a sacrilege against the holiest of ties,—had he ventured at such an instigation to estrange himself from the cause of a person so good, and fair, and friendless, as Euphrosine.

His first care was to decide on the means of purchasing further aid from such vile instruments as Flavie and her friend. He had devoted all the funds at his command, to the enlargement of the Chevalier de Mirepoix ; and was so situated that he could not instantly produce a sum sufficiently important to promise success, without exciting the suspicions and inquiry of the notary in whose hands the larger share of his fortune was deposited. Valazy had so long and completely laid aside the sum of gold committed to his charge by Euphrosine herself, that for a moment it escaped his recollection. But when it occurred to him that he was still in possession of the thirty thousand livres, he no longer hesitated to address himself to his former assistants.

But on visiting Mademoiselle Audicourt the following morning, Camille found her in one of those fits of wayward sullenness, with which persons of her degraded caste are wont to avenge upon others their consciousness of degradation. Maximilien, she said, who was just gone to the Assembly with Robespierre and Marat, had been so savage as to refuse her the purchase of a beautiful château near Ermenonville ;—the confiscated property of an emigrant who, on hearing his sentence, had exclaimed like one of the Roman patricians proscribed by Sylla, “ Ah ! this is for my villa at Alba ! ”—By way of pretext for venting her ill-humour, she protested that Maximilien’s denial could only result from his suspicion of the share she had taken in the liberation of the Chevalier de Mirepoix.

“ With which at present,” observed Camille, coldly, “ he cannot possibly be acquainted ! Besides, if you are apprehensive of exciting his displeasure by a further act of mercy, say nothing to him on the subject ; but persuade your friend to use her influence with Barrère, and I will assure you, in return, the purchase of the villa at Ermenonville.”

"Camille!" said Flavie, looking him steadfastly in the face, "either you are a very great fool, or Lyons must be paved with gold!—What can you mean by throwing away your money for a pack of thriftless, useless, ungrateful aristocrats; who, if the wheel of fortune should turn, would hold you unworthy even to grace their presence?—There is the proud woman your foster-sister, for example, whose caprices Maximilien compelled me to endure, that I might give the alarm of any measures projected at the Tuileries.—Do you remember how haughtily she repelled your offers of service, the night her husband went off upon his fool's errand to help the royalties over the frontier?—Think you that Madame de St. Florentin, even if compelled to accept life and limb at your hands, would ever learn to regard you otherwise than the *parvenu* son of her old servant?"

Flavie was little aware how deeply she probed the wounded pride of her visiter by this interrogation. The plight of Euphrosine alone repressed the angry rejoinder rising to his lips.

"But we are not speaking now of Madame de St. Florentin.—We are not now speaking even of an aristocrat. This poor young soldier ——"

"Nay! if it be a soldier, and young, Eulalie will not dare urge a word in his favour. Barrère is as jealous as a tiger; and reproached her even to tears this morning for her interference in behalf of a muscadin, such as Mirepoix."

"If that be all," cried Camille incautiously, "your friend may plead the cause of mine without incurring hazard or suspicion; the Lavoine for whom I would have her intercede, is in truth—a woman!"

"Ahi, ahi, ahi!"—cried Flavie, bursting into an immoderate shout of laughter—"Our cousin Camille the precisian, formerly so nice in his company and so prudish in his preachments, and whom we hear ridiculed as a Cato by all his brethren of the epaulet, improves, methinks, with his sojourn in the capital!"

"Have a care, Flavie!"—observed Camille, gravely. "Forbear to trifle, even in thought, with the good name of

those whom the disasters of the times estrange of necessity from the decencies of society. I pledge you my word, — my *life* if you will, — that the unhappy girl in whose favour I would enlist the tender mercies of her sex, is as pure as ——”

Again Flavie insulted him by her boisterous laughter. But suddenly checking herself, she exclaimed, — “And she is imprisoned at La Force — and you are really interested for her?”

“With my whole soul!” cried Valazy, with fervour.

“Then Camille, my friend,” returned Mademoiselle Audicourt, in a confidential tone, “spare not labour, nor money, nor intercession, to procure her release. I have no power to assist you; and common charity prompts me to own that within a week, every royalist prisoner in Paris will have contributed with his life towards the foundation of a republic!”

“Great God, what do I hear?” ejaculated Camille; — “and the king and queen ——”

“Are reserved for a slower, but not less assured condemnation. Eulalie Desmahis advised you to hasten the flight of that popinjay cousin of the St. Florentins; and now — and with far greater certainty of the coming evil, I warn you to save your friend from the general massacre.”

“My poor, unhappy Euphrosine!” —

“Surely, not the daughter of the pompous old silk-mercier, who used to live in the Rue St. Honoré; and whose books I still honour, by keeping my name inscribed therein to the amount of a few thousand livres?”

Camille did not reply. The querist read assent in his looks.

“That silly girl was ever a mad-brained enthusiast! — A pretty doll, treasured up into self-conceit by the notice of the queen, and the flatteries of Madame Thibaut.”

“Still compassion cannot but urge you ——”

“To do my best in her favour. — *Not*, however, because you would bribe my assistance — or because the Austrian tenders her minion with so dear an affection. But I reverence the girl, and will serve her; — because,

knowing me to be the abject thing I am, she never demeaned herself towards me with pride or contempt.— Grave she was in truth—nor ever jested with me, nor spoke in other terms than the course of business might demand between us. But no stranger would have guessed, from her carriage towards me, that she despised and loathed me as so different—so very different from herself.”

“ Unfortunate being!” cried Valazy. “ With such generous sentiments, why degrade yourself by enduring the condition to which your folly has betrayed you?—I, Flavie,—I who remember you at Navelles,—who have seen you turning your wheel at your mother’s door, cannot bear to reflect——”

“ Hush! hush!—I am in no humour for your prosings. Do not vex me, do not distress me. I must lose no time in the furtherance of our project. It would be a thorn to my future peace, to know that poor Euphrosine Delplanque was suffered to perish, when exertions on my own part might have saved her. Go, Camille!—If you chance to meet with Max, speak him fair, and do not exasperate him by allusions to politics, or pecuniary matters; for it is these two points that provoke him to seek your ruin.”

“ To seek *my* ruin?”

“ I have said more than I intended; yet you cannot be ignorant that *modérantisme* on the part of one bearing his name must be sufficiently galling to a good patriot.— Maximilien detests a Fayettist more than even a thorough-paced royalist!—But go!—I have no time to waste on politics!”

CHAPTER IX.

Crimes that blot the world with shame —
 Foul crimes, but sicklied o'er with Freedom's name —
 Altars and thrones subverted, social life
 Trampled to earth, — the husband from the wife,
 Parent from child, with ruthless fury torn.

CANNING.

FLAVIE AUDICOURT did not offer her pledge of service without a sincere intention of redeeming it; and her first measure was to pay a visit of consultation to Mademoiselle Desmahis; the arrangement of whose abode rendered it necessary, as in most Parisian dwellings of the middling class, to traverse the dining-room to reach the boudoir of her friend. In this first chamber, — to which she was at first denied admittance, — Flavie was astonished to find assembled round a table covered with files of papers, Danton, Pethion, Max Valazy, Robespierre, Tallien, Camille Desmoulins, Marat, as well as the master of the house, and several members of the assembly belonging to the Cordelier faction.

"Who interrupts us?" — exclaimed Barrère, fiercely, as she entered the room; while Robespierre accosted her with the gracious and benignant air he could so well assume; and Desmoulins addressed her as she passed with some of those flowery phrases of which he was habitually prodigal.

"'Tis only that fool Flavie!" — cried Maximilien, impatiently. "Let her go in, Barrère. She will engage that bird of yours, who is sulking yonder in her cage, in such feminine chirupings as will keep our counsel safe from the ears of both. — Go, Flavie! — Let us hear and see no more of you."

During the short space of time in which she had approached the gloomy conclave, where she stood with her hand wresting upon the shoulder of Maximilien Valazy, her quick eye had caught sight of muster rolls, and a large plan outspread upon the table, in which the relative positions of

the prisons of Paris were so coloured as to stand in prominent relief. Flavie entertained not the slightest doubt, that in spite of the ferocious mirth and noisy pleasantry of the party, they were arranging the measures to be adopted in a general massacre of the prisoners,—the design of which had been already hinted in her presence by several of the gang! In her suspicions, she was fully confirmed by the information of Desmahis; nor did these two worthy associates express any further sympathy in the fate of the predestined victims, than as connected with the disguised grenadier of the Filles St. Thomas, whose safety was rendered a matter of interest to their rapacity by the generous proposals of Camille Valazy.

After a discussion between them as to the most feasible plan of lending, or rather selling him their assistance, the treacherous confederate of Barrère conducted her visiter to a dilapidated part of the wainscot, through which the deliberations of the *salle à manger* were occasionally audible. For the most part, the members of the secret committee expressed their sentiments in the deep, low, concentrated tones becoming the lugubrious character of the discussion. Twice, however, Danton—in his allusions to the sacrifice of the beautiful Princesse de Lamballe, the virtuous daughter-in-law of the Duc de Penthièvre, the beloved friend of the queen—was heard to burst into a paroxysm of triumphant joy; while Marat, the fiercest and most depraved of the demons gathered in that fiendish council, expressed his exultation in terms terrific even to the contaminated beings who were concealed auditors of his invectives.

Robespierre, meanwhile, who had not yet cast off that exquisite mask of hypocrisy under which he long concealed from his most intimate associates the uncompromising and engrossing ambition to which he had predetermined to sacrifice both rival and friend, affected to moderate the sanguinary menaces of Marat; and to concoct with Barrère some new scheme of decimation, by which at least a portion of the prisoners might be withheld from slaughter, till the temper of the public mind should have manifested itself. But nothing, he admitted, could form a more judicious prologue to the sacrifice of the king and queen, than

the murder of their Sardinian favourite, Madame de Lamballe.

"We will render the manner of her death so terrible an example," said he, with a plausible smile, "that even the old women of the Rue de Grenelle shall acknowledge our generosity in according the benefit of a legal trial to Capet and his wife.—But, methinks, it were as well to spare the remaining beasts of the menagerie; lest the citizens with whom so many of them are connected by ties of blood and the still stronger bond of a common interest, should take it into their besotted heads to resent a general massacre."

"The citizens!" cried Marat. "Are they not the most miserable poltroons ever scared by an infant's tale of goblins and *loup-garoux*?—We were told 'the citizens' would interfere to prevent the abduction of the king and queen from Versailles.—We were assured 'the citizens' would rescue Foulon and Berthier;—would guard the Tuileries against the insane ruffians of St. Antoine on the 20th of June; would forbid the incarceration of Capet and his wife!—And have we not ever found that the whizzing of half-a-dozen petards, fired by half-a-dozen ragged urchins, will suffice to keep them safely barricaded within their houses beside their own firesides, muttering their paternosters like so many Capuchins? No! no!—the Parisian citizens will bear all, till their own turn comes!—Mark my words, that they would behold the whole nobility fall under the guillotine, rather than endure the prick of a pin in their defence."

"You defame your countrymen!" cried Camille Desmoulins, angrily. "They have ever called for vengeance on the perpetrators of public outrages."

"Call for vengeance!—ay!—as they would call for a glass of iced lemonade at the Café de Foi!—Easy to invoke the deliberate assistance of the laws, and punish the excesses of an hour of irritation by a stroke of the pen from a pack of pompous blockheads in black robes!—Such assistance could our women and children afford the state! But for the zeal which rushes with an unarmed breast into the mêlée,—which expends its breath and blood, its substance and prosperity, in the active defence of

the government whose protection it affects to venerate, whose constitution to maintain, — trust me it is not to be found within the six sections of Paris."

"An auspicious prospect for the future republic!" observed Maximilien Valazy, with a sneer.

"We must educate our good citizens to our own good liking!" cried Danton, with a coarse laugh. "We must teach them a few useful lessons before their schooling is ended; beginning with a general cleansing of the prisons from the aristocratic lumber thrown into them to be out of the way. We will not leave a single wooden relic in existence to betray the maudlin imbecility of our clemency; no! — not one!"

Flavie and her companion exchanged glances of dismay.

"But these infected members of the community amount, according to the lists before us, to three thousand souls?" said Robespierre, with an affectation of uneasiness.

"And what then? — If you destine a flock of one hundred sheep to the *abattoir*, you double the number of knives you would hire for the slaughter of fifty. We shall find honest fellows enough in the Faubourgs, and among the market porters, to exterminate the vermin in our warrens at so much per hundred."

"A pretty census the list will form for the future archives of history!"

"History? — the transmitted lie of ages! — What reasonable being cares for posthumous sermons! — Besides, let the first object of our emissaries be to commit to the flames every document and register found in the bureaux. We will at least cheat the curiosity of the uninitiated as to the extent of our retribution."

"But the National Guard?" — inquired Robespierre. "Remember the part they acted on the 10th of August."

"Be assured that it was only the mercenaries who joined the Federates in their attack upon the Tuileries. The national troops, — the military representation of the people, — will scarcely endure the spectacle of summary execution without trial."

"They will follow wherever their commandant is pleased to point the way."

"They would have followed La Fayette, like a drove of moles, into the crater of Vesuvius, had he assured them that such was their civic duty ; or that Liberty, like a salamander, was glowing at the bottom. But since they fancied themselves betrayed by him in his defence of the king, they have thought proper to open their eyes : I doubt whether they would follow Santerre further than his kitchen fire !"

"Even in Santerre himself," interrupted Marat, "I have no decided confidence. The brute has a thousand physical accomplishments,—has a bold word for the ear of the people, and a bold arm to make it good ; and were the strength of our bonhomme Samson to fail him, Santerre would gladly volunteer to administer the sharp physic of the guillotine to every member of the royal family. But I am doubtful whether the principles of his republicanism are sufficiently firm and comprehensive, to assist in plunging three thousand individuals into the gulf of Curtius "

"Be under no further apprehension on the subject of the National Guard," cried Danton. "I settled this morning, with Santerre and Acloque, that a grand review should take place at Versailles on one of the first days of September, so as to rid us of their blundering officiousness ; while by appearing there ourselves, we shall escape all suspicion of personal interference in the massacre of the prisons. I will now read to you the subordinate arrangements I have formed among the turnkeys and our private troops, who are to be made known to each other by wearing a tri-coloured sash and a wheat-ear by way of decoration !"

"And the bodies—surely you will not leave them in the prison courts, to spread a pestilence in the city, and provoke the comments of the citizens? "

"Do not distress yourself !—Valazy has undertaken to bespeak half-a-dozen carts from his workmen of St. Marceau, to convey the corpses to Charenton without further ceremony." *

The list of hired assassins was now inaudibly run over by the conspirators ; and the two women, sickened by all they had heard, crept away into another chamber to debate on their probabilities of success in the rescue of young

* Historical.

Lavoine. For Flavie had not judged it expedient to make her bolder and more unfeeling companion familiar with the whole truth ; nor did she even dare acquaint Camille, when he visited her on the morrow to learn the result of her inquiries, with the information she had surreptitiously acquired. She stood too much in awe of the savage Maximilien and his terrible associates, to trifle unnecessarily with their secrets.

From the intelligence she gathered on the other hand from Camille Valazy himself, Mademoiselle Audicourt was enabled to verify her previous information. He had already received from Acloque instructions relative to the projected review ; and being equally unwilling to quit Paris while his unfortunate young friend remained in so critical a predicament, or prolong his service in a body which, under its new generalissimo, gave daily evidence of tractability to the influence of those unprincipled beings who had usurped the reins of government, he sought a private audience with the commandant of his legion, and informed him that the state of his health no longer permitting his residence in the capital, he was under the necessity of seceding from his post, and retiring to his estates in Artois. With the intention of entering into the provincial gendarmerie, he solicited such certificates and recommendations as might insure him the notice of the commune of Arras ; and Acloque, who in any other instance would have exerted a jealous cognisance of the motives inducing one of the most distinguished officers of the National Guard to withdraw himself at such a moment, to seek enrolment in the paltry militia of the provinces, was well content to accept the resignation of Camille without further investigation.

He had been long jealous of Valazy's popularity with the ranks, and of the bold self-possession with which he occasionally delivered his opinion at head-quarters ; and ascribed what he considered his youthful self-conceit to his apprenticeship in the school of La Fayette, and the influence derived from his family connection with one of the leading orators of the Assembly. Having gladly furnished him with the necessary documents, he took leave of his young subordinate with affected sympathy in the infirmities

necessitating his retirement from service so active as that recently imposed upon the military guard of the metropolis.

Just as Camille Valazy was descending the steps of the convent in which the sittings of his section were held, he espied at the corner of the street his cousin Maximilien engaged in earnest discourse with three men of the lowest class ; — two of them apparently mechanics of the Faubourg, and the third a species of ruffianly swaggerer of that equivocal and nameless order, which the disorders of the revolution drew into notice from the infamous retreats in which it had previously concealed itself from legal inquisition. To evade a meeting, or pass him without recognition, would have afforded an idle provocation. Camille, with great reluctance, compelled himself *en passant* to offer his hand in friendly greeting to his kinsman.

Maximilien, who had apparently terminated his colloquy with his respectable associates, not only returned this mark of graciousness with threefold fervour, but turning hastily round, inquired of Camille whither he was going, as if disposed to bear him company.

"I am bound on a tedious errand," said Camille, who could not endure to lend his arm to a man against whom he nourished such feelings of dislike. "I am going to cross the water to Vaugirard."

"With all my heart. I have business on the Place Egalité, where we will part convoy. But how come you to be on foot, my dainty coz ? — I hear you have chariots and horsemen at command like the kings of antiquity ; for, thank Heaven ! 'the king' ceases to be a term of comparison."

"I have been engaged on municipal business at my section. A citizen cannot be too modest in his mode of fulfilling his public duties."

"I could scarcely trot it myself on more patriotic principles ! — But perhaps you will not object to the modest luxury of a fiacre ?"

"Nay ! let us walk — since walking is the order of the day," cried Camille, unwilling to place himself in a position which would render it difficult to escape his undesirable companion.

"I conclude you have been taking the orders of that ass Acloque, for the exhibition he is about to make of his military insufficiencies at Versailles? — It was a pity that we could not conscientiously retain the services of a few such fellows as Mandat; who, from their former duties in the royal guard, had at least learned to distinguish their right hand from their left; which is more than one can expect from an automaton that has been swimming in barm ever since it was as high as a hog's head. — But it would not do! those fellows of Capet's are branded as soul-deep with the fleur-de-lys, as a galley-slave bears his cauterised sentence of '*Travaux forcés*!' The civic guard is one of the great limbs of the nation; and like a human limb betraying symptoms of gangrene fatal to the body, — the mischief must be sought out, — and amputation promptly employed. At present, we have been satisfied to lop away merely the infected parts."

He looked significantly at Camille, as he spoke.

"I believe Acloque to be a thorough-going and zealous revolutionist," said he, affecting an air of unconcern. I know not what you can desire more."

"Do you not? — Then in compassion to your ignorance I will inform you. We want republicans, — stern, self-contemning republicans, — who, like the elder Brutus, will sanction with averted face the outpouring of kindred blood; — or, like his great descendant, plunge a dagger in the heart of their dearest friend in defence of the liberties of their country. — We want men who will not shrink from the clamour of the tyranny of Europe, while the fierce necks of the aristocracy of France demand the spurning foot, the exterminating guillotine! We want men who will loose with unsparing hand those sluices of noble blood, which can alone wash out the stains of degradation from the destinies of an insulted people. — We want men whom the bugbear name of regicide will not deter from affording a lesson to the nations of the earth, such as may redeem whole centuries from impending oppression. We want —"

"Enough!" cried Camille — "enough! I estimate all

the qualifications you demand, and can acknowledge that you do well to seek them ——”

“Where?” — exclaimed Maximilien, fiercely; for he anticipated an allusion, on the part of his cousin, to the companions he had just quitted.

“In the authors of the *Publiciste* — the Père Duchesne — the Vieux Cordelier! — In Danton, Marat, Hébert, and Laclos!”

“By the way,” interrupted Maximilien, “I learn from Flavie that it was *your* golden eloquence which persuaded her to interfere in procuring the enlargement of that reptile, Mirepoix; — the fellow I had reserved to open the ball of a little entertainment that will shortly recreate the aristocrats of Paris? “Please to observe, that if you continue your worship to *my* household gods — or household goods, — the time may come when I shall make reprisals.”

“I accept the challenge,” said Camille, anxious to discover whether Mademoiselle Audicourt had acquainted him with his interest in the fate of young Lavoine, or with any other particulars respecting that unhappy prisoner.

“But, remember, Camille, my fine fellow, when next you are inclined to buy a condemned sheep out of the flock belonging to the nation,” resumed Maximilien, laughing, “you will make a better bargain by applying to one of the shepherds; — to myself, for example.”

“You jest, Maximilien!”

“Not I — by the beard of Charlemagne! Excepting one of the family of Navelles, I would sell you half a dozen aristocrats at the price which Flavie and her friend fixed on the head of young Mirepoix; which, by the by, was not, *à juste prix*, worth more than a head of *brocoli Maltese*.”

“I have still a friend detained in the prison of La Force,” hesitated Camille, “whom I would willingly ransom on such terms, and ——”

“For whose release you have been already trafficking! — I thought as much, in spite of Flavie’s indignant denial! — And, prithee, for whom are you willing to throw away more of your hard-earned crowns? — Madame de Lam-

balle, for a *denier* ! — the finical milk-and-water friend of Emiline de St. Florentin. — Or perhaps the piquante Amelie de Bouffers, — or Pauline de Tourzel, — or ——”

“ My predilections are less ambitious. I offer you five hundred Louis d'ors for the liberation of a young soldier of the section Des Filles St Thomas.”

“ By name ? ”

“ Jacques Lavoine ! ” answered Camille, with a degree of confusion that could not have escaped Maximilien's notice, had he not been engaged in running over the leaves of a note book which he took from his bosom.

“ Um ! — um ! — Jacques or Jacquot Lavoine — aged 19 — arrested on the 10th of August, while defending the door of the queen's apartment against the Marseillois ! ”

“ The same. ”

“ And what may be your motive of interest in a miserable dog, worthy only to turn a spit or a cutler's wheel ? ”

Camille, perceiving that Maximilien was in the act of recourse to his former modes of cross-examination, calmed down his ruffled spirit, and replied, “ Nay, if I buy your mercy, you must purchase my secret. I shall diminish twenty *louis d'ors* for every interrogatory you require me to answer. ”

“ You will get no gold from *me*. I am poorer than a Franciscan. Yet Flavie complains of my niggardliness ! ”

“ These are not times for prodigality of any kind,” rejoined Camille, coldly. “ But it is every man's business to look to the needs of a kinsman. Oblige me, therefore, Max, by compliance with the request I have urged on your good nature ; and I will double the sum proposed — by way of loan. ”

“ And without usury ? ”

“ On your own terms. Make a note of my demand in your tablets ; and on the fulfilment of the compact on your part, the money shall be forthcoming. When may I expect an order for the release of this unlucky lad ? ”

“ By to-morrow night — or never ! ” replied Maximilien, significantly. “ But you will be at Versailles ? ”

"No, — yes! — that is, — I have little doubt of obtaining —"

"You will obtain neither leave nor indulgence at the present crisis. But what if I were to grant hospitality to your friend until your return?"

"Not for worlds!" — cried Camille, with inadvertent eagerness.

"Nay! then it is as I thought," muttered Maximilien. And having transacted his pecuniary business with his cousin, he took a hasty leave, and turned into an adjoining bookseller's shop, frequented by Ramond, Vergniaud, Carra, St. Just, Louvet, Desmoulins, and other of the literary fomenters of the revolutionary troubles. — "It is as I thought! Some mystery attaches itself to the pet prisoner of my cousin Camille. As I have no intention to sell my cat in a basket, I will visit La Force this evening, and acquaint myself with the truth."

CHAPTER X.

Les générations futures se refuseront à croire que ces forfaits exécrables ont pu avoir lieu chez un peuple civilisé, en présence du corps législatif, sous les yeux et par la volonté des dépositaires des lois, dans une ville peuplée de huit cent mille habitans; et les immobiles et trappés de stupeur à l'aspect d'une poignée de scélérats soulevés pour commettre des crimes. Le nombre des assassins n'excedoit pas trois cents.—*Paris en 1792.*

CAMILLE, who was restrained by his declarations to his late commandant, from venturing into public till the National Guard should have taken its departure to Versailles, resolved to remain in strict seclusion, in the hope of receiving such a missive from Max Valazy, or Mademoiselle Desmahis, as would enable him to visit La Force in triumph, and rescue his young friend. He entertained little doubt of procuring an immediate refuge at Florinethun for the unfortunate girl.

Evening came, — but still no letter arrived from either of his agents; and Camille was forced to content himself with

despatching to the prison a present of fruit and wine, which, as a pretext for a cheering message, one of the turnkeys was induced by a bribe to convey to the soldier Lavoine. Though Camille was persuaded that time had been found necessary to legalise the documents he demanded, and that the morrow would assuredly produce the fulfilment of an engagement rendered urgent by the well-known disorder of his cousin's finances, he could not divest himself of a vague apprehension, — a painful presentiment, a thousand chimeras of indefinite evil. It was not till morning he threw himself on his couch; and being roused from his sleep a few hours afterwards by a startling sound in the street, he perceived that the day was already advancing to its meridian. For a moment he flattered himself he had been disturbed by the arrival of a messenger from Maximilien. But he was soon undeceived by the bawling of a common crier under his windows, — announcing the taking of the city of Verdun by the Prussians; and accusing its inhabitants of having favoured the entrance of the enemy.

The first idea which suggested itself to Camille, was that of Boisgelin and its worthy inhabitants, exposed to the excesses of a conquering army. His next was that of surprise, that the authorities should permit the circulation of intelligence diffusing general alarm throughout the city. Already the Parisians were running from house to house, with assurances that the Prussian troops were on their march towards the capital; and the celebrated decree of the 11th of July, that "The country was in danger," was recognised as on the point of justification. In defiance of all personal considerations, Camille resolved to visit the Hôtel de Ville, to satisfy himself of the authenticity of the news. But long before he reached the Place de Grève, he encountered a throng of municipal officers, riding in scattered groups through the quays, and Boulevards, — attempting by proclamations to animate the zeal of the populace, and excite the more respectable portion of the citizens to arm themselves against the enemy.

He learned also from the casual information of several of his friends who, like himself, were tempted forth by the great interests of the day, that the Assembly had been

engaged in a nocturnal sitting ; and attributing to this official duty the negligence evinced by Maximilien in the discharge of his private engagements, determined to make his way towards the Feuillans, and await the breaking up of the Assembly, for the purpose of renewing his solicitations. To reach this point, it was desirable to traverse the gardens of the Palais Royal ; which, during the early part of the Revolution, was the gathering place of the malecontents ; when, just as he was crossing the Rue Richelieu towards the archway, he was touched familiarly on the shoulder by a young lieutenant of artillery, with whom he had become intimately acquainted during his service on the staff of La Fayette.

"Buonaparte !" said he — "I thought you were with the army on the frontier."

"After losing all hopes of joining Custine, I have volunteered for Sardinia.—Wish me joy of my epaulet."

"You have quitted then the service of the artillery ?—

"*A Dieu ne plaise !*—But in spite of the recent levies and the copious filling up of the Abbé Maury's corps—The Royal Emigrants,—promotion went on slowly with us. As it matters little to those who fight under the *tricolor*, whether they attack a Prussian eagle, or a Piedmontese marmot, I am off to Sardinia, in command of a battalion of national volunteers. If my stars and Montesquiou fulfil my expectations, I shall return at the end of the expedition, to claim a similar post among my old *camarades !*"

"And the Prussians,—will you not defer your departure, that you may welcome them to the Porte St. Denis ?"

"I should as soon expect to find them next week at Marseilles !—A handful of Prussian troops march upon Paris ?—Think you that any armed force now in existence would venture to defy the palladium of such a city ?—or do you perceive signs of terror among these *badauds* ?"—continued Buonaparte, pointing contemptuously to a throng of well-dressed citizens, crowding the shops of the *restaurateurs*.

"Trust me," persisted Valazy, "we have still arduous work upon our hands."

"So little," cried the captain, "that were you not too

dainty for munition-bread, I would persuade you to renounce the old-woman work of the civic guard, and come with me to Chambéry."

"I fancy," said Camille, unwilling to enter into an explanation of his position, "we shall soon want a few old women to qualify the fierce impatience of the National Guard."

"*Ça ira — ça ira !*" cried the young Corsican, with an ironical smile. "For my part, I feel no impatience unless in listening to the empty nothings with which your cousin Max Valazy's charlatan friends attract a tribe of gaping fools in wonder of their eloquence. Enter the garden yonder, and you shall see Couthon surrounded by a flock of wide-mouthed idiots, waiting to swallow every shallow phrase he is pleased to utter; — as if a single deed were not worth a legion of words!"

"Not such deeds as some we have latterly witnessed."

"Bah! a thousand idle tongues become busy in exaggerating every excess committed during the heat and intemperance of revolutionary movements. Those which disfigured the ancient monarchy, were whispered over in the polite murmurs of courtly subservience, or hidden beneath the threefold screen of the Bastille!"

"Well, well! — we know you of old for a malecontent. But at least, let our next news from Sardinia speak of actions worthy of words."

"I ask but time, to give you ample subject for conversation," cried the young soldier, with a stern smile; then bidding adieu to Valazy, he was lost among the contending crowds emerging from the gateway.

"And such, — but for this mad, this engrossing passion, — such would be my own destiny," thought Camille, as almost unconsciously he threaded the crowd congregated in the courts and gardens of the Palais Royal. "Buonaparte, is young, eager, devoted to his profession. But my age, ardour, and desire of distinction, were they unchecked by that one devouring fever of the heart, might rival his! — He is a soldier of fortune, and would win his way to wealth and fame; while I, upon whose head riches have accumulated, might attain in the distinctions of a

military life that heraldic escutcheon — so valueless in itself, — so weighty in the world's esteem, — denied me by my birth. 'Tis but to efface the obscurity of his origin, that Max Valazy would draw down the aristocracy of France to his level; while I, on the contrary, would willingly array myself in social honours, of which the acquirement might serve to elevate me in my own estimation and that of the world. And why should not I, too, seek service in Sardinia? — The certificates I hold would obtain for me the notice of the minister of war. — Napoleon Buonaparte has no protector but his sword. Like *him*, I might obtain a grade in this new corps. Like *him*, indulge in hopes that my hand might hereafter assist in planting laurels for my country. My mother is settled in prosperous tranquillity in the station of life best suited to her happiness; — and Emiline has in her favourite Mirepoix a friend whom her pride will never tempt her to disavow."

While his thoughts proceeded in this strain, and his curling lip and flashing eye bore evidence to the fierce emotions of his soul, a female, who had repeatedly attempted to attract his notice, laid her hand upon his sleeve, and walked on as if inviting him to follow. Camille, irritated by this interruption to the course of his meditations, turned abruptly round, and was on the point of proceeding in an opposite direction, when the same muffled figure was again by his side.

"I would speak to you — would speak to you of La Force!" — muttered the stranger, in a disguised voice; and Camille was no longer resentful of her importunities. — He turned anxiously to accompany her in the direction she had originally indicated; but on perceiving that she seemed anxious to avoid the appearance of being accompanied, delayed his steps for a few seconds; then deliberately followed her through the crowded gardens, and into the obscurity of a narrow street, traversing the Rue St. Honoré, where she turned into the archway of a mean *porte cochère*.

Here she paused; and Camille was by her side in a moment. But though she did not attempt to remove the veil by which her features were obscured, and panted with haste and agitation so as to be almost inaudible, he soon

discovered that his mysterious companion was no other than Flavie herself.

"Camille," said she, incoherently, "why did you leave home—why not await intelligence from me?—I have been following you far and near,—for I know that not a moment is to be lost—but ——"

"Take breath, Flavie!—compose yourself—accept my support ——"

"I can do neither!—I know not what eyes may be upon me. By my bold disobedience to the commands of Max in seeking this meeting, you little guess what a penalty of reproaches and cruelty I may have incurred!"

"Fear not, my poor girl!—I will protect you—I ——"

"*You!* Nay, Camille, neither you nor any other person can protect me from the torments to which I have bound myself. I loved him—I loved Max—followed him—quitted all for him—and he has beaten and reviled me for my folly. Yet again would I forfeit all for his sake,—again follow him,—again cleave to him,—though I know that it would be only to encounter evil usage—*for I love him still!*—Now, Camille, do you perceive that you cannot protect me?"

"I do indeed—and pity your infatuation! But your business with me, dear Flavie!—In mercy proceed."

"Well may you hasten me—for, alas! life and death hang upon this day; and I—who thought I had courage to bear many things, and glory in every event fulfilling the hopes of Max and of his party—cannot endure to think of this."

"To what horrible circumstance do you allude?—Be more explicit, I beseech you. Have you succeeded in your attempt to procure the liberation of Euphrosine?"

"Lower, Camille!—Lower, if you love your life and mine!—Spies are dispersed throughout the city,—posted in every street ——"

"This intelligence from Lorraine appears to have spread unnecessary consternation in the assembly."

"Believe it not!—those to whom you allude are too intently occupied with business at home—business which engrosses every sense of their minds and bodies—to per-

ceive the dangers that threaten them from without.—They care more for the tower of the Temple, than for the citadel of Metz ; more, far more, for the blood they are about to spill for their own gratification, than for a few soldiers lying stretched among the vineyards of Champagne.”

“ What mean you, Flavie, by these mysterious insinuations ? ” —

“ Alas ! — an oath — a terrible oath, forbids me to unfold the truth ! — Thus much I may acknowledge, without compromising my duty to Maximilien and my own safety. Know, Camille,” said she, in a still lower tone, “ that, instead of prospering in my efforts to serve the cause of Lavoine, I have been bitterly reviled for the assistance I presumed to yield you in procuring a certificate of release for the young aristocrat, Mirepoix. — This very night, the destiny of that unhappy creature, Euphrosine, will be placed beyond the reach of mercy, unless by bribery, stratagem, or personal exertion, you contrive to extricate her from La Force ! ”

“ You cannot mean that violence will be attempted on a poor defenceless prisoner ; — that the blood of a captive —— ”

“ I can mean it — I do mean it ! Their measures — their horrible measures are too comprehensively ~~oken~~ ^{taken}.”

“ But you, who are aware of the full extent of this perilous secret, you, Flavie, will counsel me — assist me — direct my movements. All that I promised — more than all — shall be yours.”

“ Camille ! — this is not a service to be chaffered for with gold. I am degraded, it is true ; but I am no Iscariot to set a price on blood.”

“ For the sake of human pity, then ! — of womanly tenderness —— ”

“ Right ! — With all my weakness — my sins to God and man — I am no wolf to luxuriate in the thought and spectacle of bloodshed. But time presses. I stole away from home during Maximilien’s attendance at the Assembly. The moment is approaching for his return, and he must not dream of my absence. Be assured, then, that this night an attack will be made on the prisons ; — that the inmates,

after the insult of a mock trial, will be dragged out to slaughter. If you tender the safety of any single prisoner, be on the spot.—Mingle with the assassins.—Lose not, a single instant, sight of the victim you would preserve. The insignia of the murderers are a tri-coloured sash, and a wheat-ear in the button ——”

A lugubrious and well-known sound arrested the words upon her lips. — “Hark !” cried Camille, “it is the tocsin ! — The municipality, terrified by the intelligence from the frontier, warns the citizens to arms.”

“Oh ! — no — no !” cried Flavie wildly ; “I tell you ’tis a signal for a massacre of the prisoners. The work of death is beginning. — has begun ! Farewell, Camille ! — I dare not delay another moment.”

She dashed from his side as she spoke ; and her manner and expressions were qualified with such frantic violence, that Camille was tempted to believe the whole of her revelation had been prompted by insanity. The tocsin, which still resounded through the air, might be a precautionary signal bespeaking further news of the march of the Prussian army.

To satisfy himself more fully, he directed his steps towards the Hôtel de la Force ; and as he approached that fated spot, it appeared to him that every face he encountered was expressive of increasing horror. His heart began to beat with vague uneasiness ; when, in an adjoining street, he perceived Monsieur Bresson, the deputy of Les Vosges, known to him in his capacity of a private citizen, as an upright man, and unbiassed lover of his country, who was stopping in his cabriolet to question a corporal of the National Guard.

“You are well met,” said he, on receiving the greeting of Camille. “Santerre, I find, sleeps to-night at Versailles for the review. — Tell me, I beseech you, to whom must I address myself as second in command ?”

“I am ignorant what sections have been included in the projected manœuvres,” said Valazy, greatly embarrassed ; ‘for I no longer form part of the civic force. But I imagine that in case of any popular tumult, the section in which it arises can furnish troops for its suppression.”

"And at whose orders?"

"That of the local authorities."

"But in case of their refusal?"

"The mayor, — the Hôtel de Ville. In case of any real emergency, they would sound the tocsin."

"You hear it, — you hear it! — yet not a soldier is under arms!"

"Have you observed any further symptoms of violence?"

"Symptoms! — Great God! — are you ignorant that organised bands of ruffians have broken into the prisons of Paris, and that a general massacre has commenced?"

Valazy clasped his hands with a deep groan, and rushed forward without reply, — flying along the streets like a madman till he reached the prison. — A riotous multitude was assembled in a state of the most furious excitement, vociferating, "that a conspiracy had been discovered, — that the prisoners of the capital, — the priests and aristocrats, — had been detected in a plot to fall on the friends of the nation, and put them to death; and that the lives of all good patriots must be protected by the extermination of such contumacious assassins."

Following the impulsion of this misled populace, Camille reached the wall of the prison opposite to the Théâtre de Beaumarchais; where the street was blocked up by a row of carts, guarded by a dozen men of ferocious aspect, — *wearing a tri-coloured sash, and a wheat-ear in the button-hole of their jackets!*

There needed not this confirmation to prove the authenticity of Flavie's intelligence; and he now learned, from the gratuitous imprecations of the mob, that they were waiting there to witness the edifying spectacle of the deposition in these carts of the bleeding bodies of the wretched inmates of La Force, who were undergoing the bootless ceremony of appearing before a mock tribunal. Almost maddened by feelings of horror and indignation, the expression of which would have proved as impotent as the rage of a chastised child, Camille felt the necessity of repressing his emotions. Affecting a patriot's interest in the scene, he inquired of the pikemen whether the extermination of the

accursed aristocrats had been secured by a proper number of executioners?

Something in the struggling agony of his utterance attracted the notice of the ruffian. "*Tudieu!*" cried he, "who art thou to come meddling in the business of the nation? — Thou hast too tender a cheek and too good a suit upon thy back to be trusted with the councils of patriots. Be off with thee, unless thou art seeking a prick with the bayonet to help thee on with thy finical catechism. I take thee for a court *muscadin* thyself; or at best for some *prestolet défroque*."

The termination of this harangue was echoed by the crowd with a chorus of hootings; and Valazy, buffeted from side to side by their insults, was glad to escape by skirting the wall of La Force, and making his way towards the *Cul de Sac des Prêtres*, leading to the Ruc St. Antoine. Just as he attained that narrow passage, he perceived by the light of a *réverbère*, — for the gloomy dusk of an autumnal evening had already gathered round the scene, — that a file of men, bearing the cognisance of Robespierre's band of assassins, was stationed along the street. Every time the wicket of La Force was opened — an event which the intercepting crowd concealed from his view, though their intemperate exclamations circulated the intelligence, — the cry of "*à l'Abbaye!*" was accompanied by a shriek of horror; — while that of "*à Coblentz!*" was followed by the appearance of a prisoner escorted through the armed line between two soldiers of the national guard — or mercenaries of the Faubourg St. Antoine; who, amid cries of "*Vive la Nation!*" and the gratulations of the mob, conducted the rescued captive in the direction of the section of the arsenal.

"Ay, ay!" cried one of the furies by whom he was surrounded, as a young man of noble appearance was thus dragged through the struggling multitude, — "we must spare a few singing birds, or the cage will become empty, and spoil our sport. That is the fourth prisoner declared innocent by the tribunal. — They will carry him to the church of the Culture St. Cathérine, and —"

"Say rather of the *Dépôt des Innocens!*" growled her

companion. "Do *you* want to find your way into La Force, by prating of saints and churches?"

Valazy, perceiving by the dispositions of the populace the impossibility of exciting an attempt at rescue in favour of the miserable victims, resolved to fly to the mayoralty and invoke the interposition of Pethion; of whose sentiments he entertained a more favourable opinion than of the rest of the Montagnard party. While hurrying to a stand of hackney coaches, he noticed a considerable gathering of the National Guard, summoned by the sound of the tocsin; and trusting that among them his person might be recognised, and his command obeyed, though every company commanded by his friends was excluded in the review, he ordered them to follow him to La Force, and replace the prison under the command of the municipal officers.

"And who are *you*, sir, who presume to address the word of command to the citizens of this section?" said an officer of the Committee of Public Safety, evidently stationed on the spot to direct the movements of the populace.

"A soldier of the nation, — Valazy!"

"Valazy, the Fayetteist! — We know nothing now, thank Heaven! of the minions of the Blondinet of the Tuileries. In what section do you serve?"

Camille, who felt the danger of giving the name of his late troop, which was bivouacked at Versailles, evaded the inquiry by imploring the soldiers to remain on the spot, whither he would instantly return with an order from the mairie.

"You will be puzzled to find your way to Pethion to-night!" said the officer with a sneer. "The mairie is invested, by decree of the Assembly. As to you, my friends, he continued, turning to the National Guards, who were assembled to the number of two hundred, "let me recommend you to disperse, and go quietly to your homes. The alarm was a malicious contrivance of ill-disposed persons, such as the officious gentleman who has just favoured you with his commands; and it will only increase the terror of the citizens to behold you under arms."

A conference ensued among the soldiers, in which the interference of Camille was coarsely repelled. — "We

know nothing of this Pekin," said they. "Shall we obey the call of a fellow who does not so much as wear our uniform?"

"Nay," cried another, "we have work enough on our hands without troubling ourselves to fight with shadows. Let us go home and wait till we receive the summons of our officers. *Vive Santerre, — morbleu ! vive Santerre !* — we will have nothing to do with Pethion, or the parchment-and-pounce soldiers of the *mairie*."

Camille's presence of mind began to abandon him. It seemed as if the hour-glass were filled with blood ; — as if every lost moment were counted by ensanguined drops. — But how to arrest their course ? — Alone against that brawling multitude, how might the still small voice of reason, — of pity, — make itself heard ? — For a moment, he thought of arming himself, and with the aid of one or two young friends on whom he could rely, attempting by the national uniform to rally a detachment of the better order, and bear down on the insurgents. But the interference already experienced on the part of the officers of Public Safety, and the assurances received from Flavie of the pre-organisation of the attack upon the prisons, satisfied him that the conspiracy was sanctioned by authority, against which the indignant resistance of a few hundreds of virtuous citizens would be of small avail.

Again, the counsels of Flavie Audicourt occurred to his mind. — "If there be a single prisoner whose safety you tender, — be on the spot ! — Mingle with the assassins. — Lose not a single moment sight of the victims !" In pursuance of this advice, he resolved to return home and divest himself of those outward characteristics of respectability which had drawn upon him the insults of the mob. But Valazy was still at the distance of more than a mile from his residence ; and as he was making his way, for expedition-sake, through the more unfrequented streets, he perceived that the track of a man whom he had unintentionally followed from the mob surrounding La Force was marked on the pavement by traces of blood. For a moment, Camille turned to look upon his own foot-marks, expecting to find them bear witness in a manner equally terrible

to the nature of the scene he had quitted. But finding that the sanguinary drops must have issued from some wound on the person of the fugitive, he quickened his steps, to fulfil the claims of humanity by a tender of assistance.

The steps of the wounded man were enfeebled by loss of blood; and when Valazy came up with him, he was leaning against the post of a gateway, attempting to bind up his arm with a handkerchief already saturated.

"You are seriously hurt!" — cried Camille, supposing him a victim escaped from the fury of the multitude. "Let me assist you!" But lo! on reaching the object of his solicitude, he perceived him to be an artisan of the Faubourg St. Antoine; wearing round his waist a tri-coloured sash, and in his button-hole an ear of wheat!

Involuntarily Camille recoiled from the contact of such a miscreant; but recollecting himself in a moment, he resolved to turn this encounter to advantage.

"How, *mon brave*!" he exclaimed, "have the conspirators, after all, turned upon the defenders of the nation. Are the aristocrats armed, that you find yourself thus disabled?"

"Armed, *morguienne*! — for what do we pay the *guichetiers* if we are to find the chevaliers du poignard skulking there as well as in Capet's palace? — No, no! — I got this unlucky cut from the hatchet of my neighbour Pierrot Ledru, as we were helping the priest of Sulpice the first stage on his road to heaven; and so you see I am baulked of the end of the entertainment. With my right arm disabled, I found I should have no chance of acting the part of valet-de-chambre to the Lamballe ——"

"And thus the nation will be deprived of your services! — Parbleu! 'tis a pity that it should lose a helping hand where good labourers are scarce. — How say you, — shall I take your duty?"

"You?" cried the ruffian, with a sneer of horrible contempt. "You — my dainty gentleman? — Methinks your jacket was not made for such honest service."

"'Tis unfair to judge a man from appearances. My heart is in the cause, and my hand stronger than it may seem. So, to save words, give me your vest and sash,

and find your way home in this coat of mine, which you so despise."

"Bah! — my wife would turn her back on such a *fre-luquet*."

"No, my worthy friend, your wife would be wise enough to find her way to the *fripiers* with your finery. — But bid her have a care. She may find more *louis d'ors* dancing in the waistcoat-pocket than you are aware of."

"If that be the case," said the wounded man, "and as this sleeve of mine is cloven so that it would take Jeanne-ton a day to sew together again, I will consent to put on your aristocratic trumpery. But be pleased to remember that in sticking this wheat-ear into your button, you undertake active service. There is work yonder on hand which cannot be done with one eye shut."

"I know it — I know it! — But you are perhaps come from l'Abbaye. — Will the same badge enable me to join the patriots at La Force?"

"Aha! — *you* too would have a blow at the queen's Sardinian minion? — Be satisfied! — I belong to the La Force company; where, before I got this pestilent cut across the sinews, I had done good part in building up a pile of bodies as high as my head. — Jarni! — now you look like a man!"

"And will act like one!" cried Camille, shuddering beneath the odious contamination of the jacket — clammy with the blood of the human tiger before him. "Quick! — the watchword — your cutlass —"

"The word of the night, *citoyen*, is Brutus! I made no bargain for my arms."

"And how, think you, am I to do your work without your tools? — But I do not mind buying the right of ridding the citizens of a gang of aristocrats. Here is a double louis. — Now give me your weapon!"

"Softly!" said the ruffian. But Camille's patience was exhausted by the disgusting colloquy he had been forced to endure. Throwing the coin on the pavement, and snatching the cutlass from the wretch whom he knew to be too much weakened for resistance, he was out of sight in a moment.

Staggered by the shock, the hired assassin exclaimed with ferocious imprecations against his violence ; then throwing his new vestments over his left arm, and having secured the *louis d'or*, he bent his way towards a neighbouring *tapis franc*, — the cant term of the infamous resorts of the ruffians of the Revolution.

“ *Est y drôle sti-là !* ” murmured the bleeding patriot. “ *Parbleu*, — ’tis a better citizen than myself. *I* was to have earned good wages by my labour ; while he, on the contrary, pays six times the market-price for the mere pleasure of doing it ! — ’Twas a good cutlass, though, after all ! — I stole it the day of the taking of the Bastille ; and since then, it has seen service. — But its day is over ! — I warrant me, yonder *muscadin* will flourish it like a girl.”

CHAPTER XI.

Une action exécrable, qui n'a jamais eu, et qui n'aura jamais, s'il plaît à Dieu, de semblable.—PREFACE.

ON returning to the fatal spot, Valazy encountered one of those itinerant venders of eau-de-vie, always to be found in the vicinity of the revolutionary mobs, supplying the rioters with draughts of unnatural excitement ; and having fortified his nerves to meet the spectacle of horror he was prepared to encounter, he pushed his way through the crowd towards the wickets of La Force.

The ferocious assemblage readily gave way to a person wearing the badge assumed by the chartered assassins of the Jacobins ; and even encouraged him in his passage by expressions too sanguinary to be perpetuated in these pages. From their outcries, it appeared that the favourite anticipation of the hour was the murder of the lovely *Princesse de Lamballe*. At every successive opening of the wicket, an inquiry ran from mouth to mouth, whether the Sardinian had yet made her appearance ; while the agents of her father-in-law, the Duc de Penthièvre, who were

posted in the crowd, in the hope of defending her from further insult, drew closer and closer to the scene of bloodshed. Immediately fronting the main entrance of the prison, the crowd was kept back from a small open space, by the mercenaries of the National Guard of St. Antoine ; among whom were mingled ten or twelve assassins, wearing dresses similar to that of Valazy, and armed with axes, hatchets, sabres, and other implements of destruction, — the mob having objected to a discharge of musketry, as interfering too noisily with their pastime.* By these miscreants the work of death was so speedily and unsparingly accomplished, that a horrible accusation was borne against their labours, by a pile of bleeding bodies heaped against the wall, and scantily covered with sacks; while an ensanguined stream filled the channel. Such was the scene—and such the spot—where Valazy, with dilated eyes and burning brow, stood waiting the appearance of Euphrosine ! — Involuntarily, alas ! his thoughts recurred to that brilliant theatre of the Trianon, in which he had beheld her for the first time, — so young, so innocent, — so beautiful, — so prosperous !

Again the wicket was unclosed. - By the light of the lamps and a profusion of torches stuck against the prison-wall, emitting a lurid light and volumes of pungent smoke above the sea of ferocious visages filling the area, Camille saw the Chevalier du Rhulières, the former commandant of the gendarmerie of Paris, whom he had lately beheld engaged in cheerful sport with Réginald de Mirepoix, conducted with his head uncovered and his countenance marked by an expression of calm resignation, between two men attired in habits similar to his own.—In a moment, the shouting populace subsided into silence ! — Those savage faces were characterised by a simultaneous stare of curiosity and suspense, while awaiting the sentence on this fresh victim ; while Rhulières, prepared for the worst, cast a comprehensive glance of astonishment and disgust on the extraordinary scene he had been dragged from his bed to witness.

* Weber.

To witness ? — alas ! his doom was already sealed ! — On the termination of the insolent interrogation to which he had been subjected by a species of burlesque tribunal held in the court of the prison, he had heard by way of sentence, the words “ *à l’Abbaye !* ” pronounced by his self-elected judges ; and believing himself condemned to be transported only to another and probably more gloomy dungeon, submitted without reluctance to the guidance of the soldiers who presented themselves to guard his person through the wicket of La Force.

And now, amid the unnatural stillness of that midnight multitude, he heard the same words repeated ! — *A l’Abbaye !* ” cried one of his conductors, in a hoarse voice, which, penetrated to the remotest straggler of the crowd, was followed by a yell of applause.—But Rhulières heard it not ! — The inhumanity of his fellow-citizens added no anguish to the present hour ; nor was the last feeling of his heart a throb of indignation against the debasement of the human species. Ignorant of the destiny prepared for him, he offered not the least resistance. Stunned by the first blow of the assassins, — the stroke of the axe which separated his head from his body, was only a further insult offered to his senseless remains !

Camille, breathless with consternation, was still so hampered in the throng, that he did not appear withheld by reluctance from participating in the murderous task. But when a second helpless victim was introduced through the fatal wicket, — an aged priest, marked like Rhulières by the condemnatory announcement, — and still, with suspended breath and hands and teeth clenched with the intensity of repressed emotions, he stood aloof from the scene of action, — he was contemptuously upbraided by the spectators.

“ Art thou asleep, sluggard ? ” — cried one of the worthy emulators of Théroigne de Méricourt, posted among the foremost ranks of the populace, whose vociferation had long obtained it the name of the “ *huaille de Paris*. ” — “ Art thou asleep, that thou bearest no hand in the labours of thy companions ? ”

Fortunately for Valazy, the rage agitating his soul from

the spectacle of murderous injustice he had that moment witnessed, rose to his lips ; imparting to his reply a tone of savage moroseness that well became his assumed character.

“ Be silent, wretched woman ! ” said he, “ nor presume to judge the actions of the patriots. Dost thou not perceive that I am wounded, and disabled from duty ? ”— And the mob to whom he exhibited his sleeve rent asunder and stained with blood, expressed a ready sympathy in his mischance.

“ This is the second of our fellow-citizens, who has suffered a serious injury in the extermination of these reptiles,” cried one of the *forts de la Halle* or market porters, who had come forward to volunteer his services. “ Bénéoit Hardouin, who quitted us just now, had his right arm cloven to the bone ; and here is another citizen wounded by the resistance of the aristocrats. Take my advice, friend !— Be off to the pharmacien’s at the sign of the Good Samaritan, in the Rue St. Antoine, and get thy cut salved, or the smart will spoil thy work to-morrow. They say there are prisoners here in La Force to keep us on the alert these three days to come.”

“ I thank thee, citizen ! ” growled Camille to his friendly counsellor. “ The spectacle before me will work my best cure.”

“ He says right ! ” cried several of the *huaille*. “ Has not Robespierre often told us at the Cordeliers, that the sacrifice of an aristocrat is more refreshing to a good patriot than food or sleep ? ”

Fortunately for Camille’s presence of mind in the cruel position in which he was placed, the two next prisoners emitted from the wicket received the absolving sentence of “ To Coblenz ! ” While an universal growl marked the disappointment of the crowd, the rescued victims were severally conducted by their guards through the armed file extending through the Cul de Sac, towards the Dépôt des Innocens ; and Valazy profited by the interval, to inquire of the spectators with whom he kept up the grumbling lamentations of a wounded man, whether many of the grenadiers of the Filles St. Thomas had been executed.

"But one, that I have seen!"—said the market porter.

"A veteran or a stripling?"

"Thou hast only to step forward among thy comrades, and fling off the sack to satisfy thy curiosity. Nay! methinks by the torchlight I can distinguish the fellow's head—look—next to the long auburn tresses."

But Valazy could not trust himself to look! He felt that the total extinction of his hopes of saving the unfortunate Euphrosine would be too much for endurance. He resolved to wait patiently the event.

But to witness *patiently* the immolation of shrieking women,—of Christian priests,—of aged men,—guiltless of all crime, save that of nobility of birth, or fidelity to the cause of their sovereign—Alas! his very reason seemed impaired by the excesses he was compelled to witness.—His eyes rolled wildly in their sockets,—his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth, when he attempted to join in the ferocious clamour of the shouting multitude. His compressed lips were parched as by a burning fever.

"I can no longer endure this agony!" he exclaimed, panting for breath. "Let me die,—let me die,—and close my eyes on this scene of horror and iniquity!"

"Nay," cried his companions, misinterpreting the motive of his ejaculation. "Why not suffer the wound to be properly dressed at once?—Though these aristocrats are a disgusting spectacle, dost thou not see that every half hour delivers us from half-a-dozen of the gang?—But hush! the wicket opens.—A woman, too,—a woman who might be young and pretty, were she not as worn and thin as one of the hatchets yonder."

"How deadly white are her face and arms!—the terrors of conscience!"

"That sackcloth garment, supplied by the prison to its pauper-inmates, is somewhat different, I suspect, from the robe in which the Sardinian princess will make her appearance.—Aha! our wounded friend pushes forward now,—he wishes to have a touch at this lamb of the fold."

"The sentence!" cried several of the mob, somewhat interested by the youthful and humiliated air of a girl unrecognised as belonging to the obnoxious aristocracy.—

Even the soldiers seemed to pause before they pronounced the fiat of destiny on their pale and shrinking victim. — A dead silence again prevailed.

“*A l'Abbaye !*” — roared out the elder of the two guards.

“*A l'Abbaye !*” — re-echoed the crowd ; and already the executioners approached with their uplifted weapons. But Euphrosine Delplanque recoiled not, nor uttered the faintest cry of alarm. — Her soul was concentrated in prayer !

“ Do not strike !” — cried one of the assassins, interposing a bleeding arm between them and their victim. “ You owe me some recompense for this accursed gash. — Give me the woman for my prize.”

“ Rather aid me of my miserable existence !” cried Euphrosine, roused to a consciousness of their proceedings, and sinking upon her knees.

“ Thou wert but too well off to save thy life by becoming mate to a good patriot !” exclaimed the old soldier, to whose knees she was clinging. “ Up, and thank him for his mercy.”

“ Nay,” shrieked the agonised prisoner, “ give me not into the hands of this wretch. Man !” she persisted, folding her arms round her executioner, “ you are old — your hairs are grey ! — I have an aged and grey-headed father. — For *his* sake — for the sake of his sorrow — kill me at once rather — ”

“ Enough of this raving !” — cried another of the miscreants, “ let her die at once, — it is her sentence.” And he swung round his axe to insure a steadier aim.

“ Friends !” cried Camille, turning to the mob, “ it is for you to decide. My wounds should purchase, methinks, the good-will of my fellow-patriots. — Do you adjudge me this whimpering fool to be my house-drudge ?”

“ *Sans phrase !*” — cried the foremost of the populace. — “ She seems to hate thee worse than the axe. — So take her, and break her stubborn neck in thine own way.”

Euphrosine had fallen insensible on the ground at this horrible sentence. But Camille, recovering his strength in such a crisis, snatched her from the earth ; and flinging her across his shoulder, forced his way through the mob — who greeted him with acclamations and shouts of

laughter for what they conceived to be a project of further evil. — Bewildered, — oppressed, — but with the vague consciousness of triumph uppermost in his thoughts, he staggered through several adjacent streets ; still fancying that the avengers of blood were behind him, — that the assassins of La Force would overtake him, and wrest his unhappy victim from his arms. — All his care was to get beyond the reach of the echoing shouts of the fatal *huaille*.

Remembering the obscure passage he had traversed early in the evening, Camille bent his course thither in hopes of finding it deserted. But it was now crowded with persons anxiously inquiring the progress of events at La Force ; among whom his wild and distracted appearance, and the figure he held in his arms with her long black tresses entangled round her, excited observation and suspicion.

He would have given worlds for shelter. But every house was closed for the night which might have opened to receive two persons of an appearance so suspicious ; — nor did he dare encounter the scrutiny of any frequented part of the city. — At length his exertions enabled him to reach a stand of fiacres ; and in a few minutes, he found himself jolting towards his own home, with Euphrosine senseless in his arms. Welcome as was even that anxious interval of danger, Camille did not consider it prudent to afford the driver a clue to his identity ; but desiring to be conveyed towards the Feuillans, dismissed the coach as if from motives of economy, and dragged on beneath his burden ; which, by the few passengers astir at that hour of the night, was judged to be the body of some murdered prisoner.

In this distressing condition, they reached the courtyard of his hotel ; and ascending the staircase with difficulty, he attempted to open the door with a *passe par tout*. — Alas ! it was carefully barred from within !

Camille rang a furious peal ; cursing the zealous precaution of his domestics, which thus served to prolong his annoyance ; when, after a delay of some minutes, having renewed his summons, the door was cautiously opened and as instantly closed against his entrance. Toinon Marmin, who on Valazy's return to Paris the preceding year, had

insisted on following him from Boisgelin to become *valet de pied*, or *de chambre*, or *d'écurie*, or, in short, *de* any thing he pleased, to monsieur le capitaine, having learned in the course of the morning the disastrous intelligence of the success of the Prussians, and being in hourly expectation of their descent upon the capital, could by no means make up his mind to the propriety of admitting into the house in the dead of the night, a wounded ruffian of the Faubourg St. Antoine, bearing the dead body of a woman.

"Do you not recognise me?" cried Camille, having summoned him a second time to the door.

"*Houai!* — *ora pro nobis* — *sanctissime Trinitas!* — — *ora pro nobis* — *beatissime Maria!* — Monsir Bauveau! — Madame Bauveau! — Here is a thief of a patriot with my master's voice, claiming admittance during his absence. — *Jésus not' sauveur!* — It is certainly his spectre —"

"Thank Heaven!" ejaculated Valazy, when his *homme de confiance*, roused from his sleep by Toinon's vociferations, at length made his appearance, and recognising his master, threw open the door of the antechamber. "Thank Heaven, you are come, my good, good Bauveau. Close the apartment — bar the outer door as vigilantly as before! — Ask me no questions. — But summon your wife; let a fire be kindled —"

"*Sacristie!* — And it is the master, after all," cried Toinon; "the master a-guisarding as if Shrove Tuesday were here, and Lent at hand! *Ah! mille tonnerres!* he is wounded — Monsieur Camille is wounded; and my poor mother so far off — and not a drop of her vulnerable to be found nearer than Boisgelin! — And to have supported the dead body of that miserable woman upon his wounded arm!"

"Will you cease your abominable clamour!" cried Bauveau, assisting Camille to deposit his burden on a sofa. "Bring faggots, — lights, — fresh water. Bid my wife hasten hither! Bid —"

Fortunately for Mademoiselle Delplanque her tending and recovery depended not on the aid of either Valazy, his valet, or his *frotteur*; for like most of their sex under critical embarrassment, their presence of mind was wholly

lost. But Madame Bauveau, the respectable housekeeper of Camille, having made her appearance, and satisfied herself that the murdered woman announced to her in the incoherent phrase of Antoine Marmin was no other than an unfortunate young lady rescued from the prison of La Force, exerted herself with becoming adroitness. A warm and comfortable chamber was instantly prepared ; and when Euphrosine partially recovered her senses, she found herself lying on a strange bed in a strange apartment ; attended by the motherly middle-aged woman, by whose cares she had been restored to consciousness.

" Take me from this terrible place ! " — was her half-delirious exclamation. — " Save me from the arms of that miscreant — and let me die at once. — Ha ! — where am I — this house — this tranquil spot — a woman too ? — Where are my horrible gaolers — where my judges — where the executioner — the fierce multitude — the — — Tell me — tell me — where am I — and who brought me hither ? "

" Monsieur le Capitaine Valazy, my good master, brought you hither, my dear young lady," whispered Madame Bauveau, with soothing compassion.

" Camille ! " again cried Euphrosine, attempting to raise herself from her couch.

" The same, Mademoiselle. Be composed — you have nothing further to fear."

Euphrosine, relieved from her conflicting terrors, threw herself back upon the pillow, and burst into an agony of tears ! — They were the first she had shed since the commencement of her agonising trial ; for at the approach of death, — at the approach of shame, — her burning eyeballs were sealed against the involuntary relief of weeping. It was only the powerful touch of gratitude, — gratitude to Heaven, and to its earthly agent, — which caused those fountains of consolation to flow anew.

In the mean time, the anxieties of Camille were taking a new and scarcely less painful direction. — During his absence, he had been visited a second time by Laporte, with intelligence of the most alarming nature from Florinethun !

CHAPTER XII.

She's up and gone — my graceless girl —
 And left my failing years !
 My blood before was thin and cold,
 But now, 'tis turn'd to tears.
 My shadow falls upon the grave,
 So near the brink I stand :
 She might have stayed a little yet,
 And led me by the hand.

Hoon.

THE harvests of Manoir had ripened beneath the summer sunshine, and been reaped and garnered under the glowing brightness of the early autumn, as regularly and providently as though no excitement of patriotic rage distracted the capital ; and as though the sovereigns of France still dispensed their smiles of luxurious egotism from the throne of Versailles. In the tranquil valley of the Lianne, little was heard of the revolutionary excesses of Paris ; and saving that a tri-coloured pennant waved from the attic story of the Mairie of Samer on state occasions, instead of the milk-white streamer which had floated there from century to century on the Fête St. Louis and other high solemnities of the *ancien régime*, and that the National Guard had been organised at Boulogne, Desvres, Samer, and St. Pol, the triumph over the wreck of royalty was but slightly perceptible on the coast of Picardy, or in the states of Artois.

Satisfied by the affectionate letters she received from time to time from her dear Camille, which although inexplicit on political topics, contained a general statement of the well-being of Madame de St. Florentin and his own health and prosperity, — that her dear Emiline, in devoting her attention to the care of her aged father, was prevented from returning to her own desolate hotel, and incurring the animosity of the populace, — Madame Valazy no longer lamented the circumstances which had forbidden the little party to take refuge at Manoir.

“ When monsieur le duc is no more,” said she, as she

traversed the trimly alleys of her garden, or made her daily round through the pastures of the water-meadows, "the marchioness will deign to bring her sweet children and pass a summer at Manoir. The sea-breezes will animate their little frames, and even madame derive benefit by losing sight for a time of the sad scene of her misfortunes. I shall labour with such affection to insure her comfort, and my son will strive so vigilantly that she should miss none of her accustomed luxuries! — Nor will she lack companions to beguile her leisure. There are the Sénéchal de Campaigno, my neighbour yonder at Hesdin l'Abbé; — and there is the noble family of Rosamel; — ay! and even the St. Aldégonde so far as Colamberg, who will hasten to offer their homage to one who has the best blood of France warm in her veins. My poor dear lady will have no reason to lament Navelles, — no motive to sigh for Florincthun."

With these sanguine expectations to cheer her through the spring and summer, Madelon suffered the roses to bud, blow, and fade away, without repining. In embellishing her homely but cheerful retreat, she felt that her toils might be eventually rewarded by the approval and enjoyment of her foster-daughter; and she was even at the trouble of planting a little flower-garden at Manoir for the future recreation of little Emiline and Aglaë de St. Florentin, an exact fac-simile of that devoted to the amusement of her own little Emiline de Navelles, in the stately gardens in Lorraine, some twenty years before. — She heard, indeed, from the abhorrent lamentations of the Curé Blaisel, when he occasionally took his cup of *café noir* and *petit verre* at Manoir, on his way to visit some sick parishioner in the commune of Isques, that the king and queen had been driven from their palace and plunged into a prison of common malefactors. But she fancied all these public calamities of a transitory nature; — that the allies and the army of Condé would appear, like the good genii at the termination of some *spectacle-féerie*; and so long as Camille was safe as an official functionary of the provisional government and her noble patrons through their seclusion at Florincthun, she was content to devote

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With these sanguine expectations to cheer her through the spring and summer, Madelon suffered the roses to bud, blow, and fade away, without repining. In embellishing her homely but cheerful retreat, she felt that her toils might be eventually rewarded by the approval and enjoyment of her foster-daughter; and she was even at the trouble of planting a little flower-garden at Manoir for the future recreation of little Emiline and Aglaë de St. Florentin, an exact fac-simile of that devoted to the amusement of her own little Emiline de Navelles, in the stately gardens in Lorraine, some twenty years before. — She heard, indeed, from the abhorrent lamentations of the Curé Blaisel, when he occasionally took his cup of *café noir* and *petit verre* at Manoir, on his way to visit some sick parishioner in the commune of Isques, that the king and queen had been driven from their palace and plunged into a prison of common malefactors. But she fancied all these public calamities of a transitory nature; — that the allies and the army of Condé would appear, like the good genii at the termination of some *spectacle-féerie*; and so long as Camille was safe as an official functionary of the provisional government and her noble patrons through their seclusion at Florincthun, she was content to devote

her cares to her granary, her fleeces, and the domestic distillation which was to supply Curé Blaisel's *petit verre* with *cassis* for the ensuing year, without troubling herself concerning newspaper announcements, or political predictions.

One day, as she was superintending the autumnal knotting of the roots of thrift along the raised terrace of the little garden projected for *ces chères petites marmottes*, Madame Valazy perceived along the vista of the avenue the approach of a mysterious vehicle, which was neither the covered cart of the miller of Isques,—nor of the *coquetier* supplying himself at the adjoining farm with eggs for the English speculators of the Calais market,—the *demi-fortune* of old Madame Duhamel of Quéhen, nor the *calèche* of the superintendent of the Ponts et Chaussées from Condette,—who, on the national decree for the suppression of armorial bearings, is said to have caused the interposition of a mysterious cloud on his carriage, as if in concealment of a distinction which had never existed on its panels! A cabriolet-de-poste was standing at her door; and hurrying, “on hospitable thoughts intent,” towards the entrance, she beheld a personage, announced by Tonton as a “*gros Moussieu tout biau,—tout sentil,*” approaching with hasty strides along her garden-terrace;—a three-cornered hat flourished in his hand, and an enamel watch-chain, three-quarters of a yard in length, dangling from his waistcoat.

“I have the honour to salute my excellent friend, Madame Valazy,” said the old gentleman, with a peevish tone and air, which accorded ill with the courtly politeness of his diction.

Madelon's sunshiny smile of hospitality was ready for any stranger within her gates; but she detected no traces in the poor old, wasted, dwindled man before her, (whose doublet—albeit of the choicest *velours épinglé*, was a world too wide for his shrunken person,)—of the pompous, rotund, and superannuated mercer of the Rue St. Honoré, who had so tormented her with his officious civilities during the illness of her son some four years before; and who, at that period, was as profoundly pene-

trated with a sense of his innate dignity, as the Delhai Lama, or the head of the Celestial Empire.

"Your humble servant, sir!" she rejoined, with a respectful obeisance, nothing doubting that her visiter was one of "*ces nobles*" from the populous valley of Samer; intent on the purchase of a few of her mérinos, or on a neighbourly appeal to her generosity touching the far-famed breed of bantams. "You will do me the favour of walking into the house?" And having preceded him into her salon, and stationed him in the *bergère de cérémonie* covered with Utrecht velvet, in which only the Curé Blaisel was permitted to refresh his dislocated bones after a pilgrimage on the old black pony, she waited patiently for an opening of the negotiation.

But the ex-mercier, — who, in spite of his recent afflictions, had still the great soul of a plenipotentiary swelling in his bosom, — took a voluminous *foulard* from his pocket, on which he proceeded to sprinkle drops of Hungary water from a small *flacon*, — and deliberately refreshed his face and forehead, while he cast upon every successive object in the room an irritated glance of surprise and contempt; — muttering something beneath his handkerchief of *luxe de roturier*, which caused Madame Valazy's cheeks to tingle with indignation.

"It must be Monsieur le Comte de St Aldégonde himself!" thought Madelon. "And yet the noble owner of the Château de Colanberg has too much gentleness of breeding to come here and affront me in my own dwelling, where I cannot so much as give him a woman's word of reproof in return. I wish the pompous old don would explain himself; for I do not like to feel that such a person has the power of placing a padlock on my lips. — *Dame!* have I not been addressed at Navelles by monseigneur the late dauphin — by the illustrious Prince de Conti — by — You have had a likely morning, sir, for your drive" — suddenly exclaimed Madelon, gathering courage from this mental recapitulation.

"Without interrupting you, madam," (as a Frenchman generally prefaces any speech which offers a most deter-

mined interruption) — “may I venture to ask when you last heard from your son ? ”

“ My son ! ” reiterated Madame Valazy, fearing by her reply to implicate her Camille in some mysterious mischief. — “ I am no great pen-woman, sir, and my son has too many avocations to allow him much leisure for writing.”

“ Madame Valazy ! ” cried the stranger, with a considerable extension of the lungs, and disentangling his right hand from the *foulard* in order to enforce his indignation by an emphatic thump upon the arm of the *bergère*, “ this subterfuge will not serve. — This evasion will not satisfy the vengeance of an outraged parent. — I accuse your son, madam, as the base betrayer of my daughter.”

“ I do not understand you, sir ! ” cried the bewildered Madelon, recurring to all she had heard in the country of the beauty and distinctions of the young Countess at Colamberg.

“ And yet I speak plain ! ” exclaimed the old man, with increasing warmth. “ I tell you, Madelon Valazy, I am indebted to the seductions of your detested son, for my unhappy Euphrosine’s departure from the path of duty.”

“ Euphrosine ! — cried Madame Valazy, rising from her chair with a welcome sensation of relief, both moral and physical. “ Have I, then, after all, the satisfaction of addressing Monsieur Delplanque, the silk mercer of Madame la Marquise de St. Florentin ? ”

“ Delplanque — ex-mercier de la majesté, et de la cour de France ! ” — emended the old man with a profound bow ; not, indeed, addressed to his auditress, the Commère Valazy — but to the august designations passing through his lip.

“ So altered — so sadly altered ! — *Dame !* who could have recognised him ? ” — she exclaimed, involuntarily perusing the wasted lineaments of the poor old man.

“ *Altered !* — You may say so, madam ! ” he replied, with a total change of manner ; for even the vanity of Delplanque’s nature subsided at any allusion to his paternal grievances. “ And *wherefore* am I altered — *how* have I been bowed down to the dust ? ”

"You have received tidings, I trust, of Mademoiselle Euphrosine, since her imprudent flight?"

"Imprudent!" repeated the angry old man; "is *that* the word to qualify an act of cruelty which has dishonoured the grey hairs of her aged father in the sight of all his fellow townsmen; — and left his infirm years to the mercy of aliens and strangers? Imprudent! — *que diable!*"

"The excellent and amiable qualities of Mademoiselle Euphrosine, forbid me to use a harsher term!" cried Madelon, feelingly.

"Yes, she *was* indeed excellent!" ejaculated Delplanque, forgetting his *foulard*, his anger, and his dignity, and clasping his hands together in utter anguish. "Oh! Madame Valazy, — great and mysterious is the tenderness of a father, — since, in spite of all my child's misdoings, my heart yearns at the mention of her name, and melts with forgiveness at the sound of her praise. So promising a creature — so sweet a child! The queen herself, attracted by her grace and loveliness, would willingly have adopted my little Euphrosine, but that her poor mother would not hear of parting with her. And she was right; for how would it have ended? — Where are Mesdames Thibaut and Campan — her protectresses of old? — Where is Madame la Princesse de Lamballe, the surintendante — where Madame de Tourzel? — Where are they, for the recompense of all their services, and all their loyalty? — But why do I speak of *their* misfortunes — of *their* degradation? — How know I that my own Euphrosine, — my cruel, rebellious, precious daughter, — may not have encountered a destiny far more disastrous?" — And tears began to fall abundantly from the eyes of the afflicted mercer; nor could Madelon, with all the sincerity of her sympathy, hit upon any argument for his consolation.

"What was there, — what indulgence, — what luxury, — what whimsey, — in which she was denied? — The ladies of the queen slept not softer, nor were less charged with the vexatious cares of life. — Her father's purse, — but what of purses? — her father's fond, doting heart, — was open to her command! — And yet she left me, Madame Valazy, — left me without preparation for the blow;

slid, as it were, from beneath my hand, uplifted in benediction over her head ; forsook me with the callous ingratitude of an alien and a cast-away !”

“ But you have surely heard from mademoiselle since she quitted Arras ? — It is now more than a year since she visited me, when I attempted to dissuade her from following up her mad adventure.”

“ From time to time, a mysterious billet has reached me, imploring a continuance of my affection towards my rebellious child. These letters acknowledged, in a vague and unsatisfactory manner, that their writer was resident in Paris ; and devoted to a course of perilous exertion, such as demanded the protection of my prayers ; a course which she stated herself to have embraced in this clandestine manner, only with the view of avoiding the pain of my prohibition and interference.”

“ Ma’amsselle Euphrosine told me,” observed Madelon, “ when she visited me immediately on the return of the royal family from Varennes, that she was going to Paris in disguise — ”

“ To join her destinies with those of Monsieur Camille Valazy — the *ex negociant* of Lyons, and present leader of a notorious troop of the national banditti ! — I thought so ! — With whom, it seems, she was prevailed to indulge in furtive interviews, even so long ago as the time when I unsuspectingly afforded him the hospitality of my humble retreat in the Marais.”

“ No such thing ! ” cried Madelon, indignantly. “ Camille thought not of your daughter either then, or at any other time.”

“ Ah ! woeful was the day to poor Jean Thomas Alexandre Delplanque, when he received a recommendation of the young scape-grace from the worthy Dacquin family — his excellent correspondents at Lyons ! — Woeful the day when he undertook to present an obscure provincial of such equivocal reputation in the courtly precincts of Versailles ! — The Bastille was still standing in that triumphant jubilee of royalty. Would to Heaven I had employed my interest with the Duc de Liancourt to get a *lettre-de-cachet* enforced upon one who commenced his career in Paris by an attempt at assassination in the royal theatre of the Trianon ;

and ended it by bearing the banner of the renegade La Fayette, and carrying off the daughter of the *ex-mercier bréveté de la cour de France!* ”

“ Heard any one ever so provoking and wicked a misrepresentation ! ” cried Madelon, half inclined to call in the assistance of Tonton, and command the forcible ejectment of this base maligner of her Camille’s reputation. but the sight of the old man’s withered countenance disarmed her indignation. “ As to *carrying off*, monsieur le mercier,” said she at length, in a tone of expostulation, “ I can myself bear witness that there was neither violence nor persuasion in the case. Mademoiselle Euphrosine assured me, face to face, — here in this very room, — that her errand in Paris was to devote her humble attendance to her majesty during her imprisonment at the Tuileries.”

“ For a long time — for many months — I persuaded myself that such was the case. I knew the girl to be infatuated in her zeal for the cause of Marie Antoinette, from which I vainly attempted to wean her by removing to Arras. But what is the use, Madame Valazy, of attempting to traverse a woman’s will ? — Close up the door, and she will gain intelligence through the window : — close up the window, and the birds of the air will visit her with the tidings she covets ! — Satisfied of the impossibility of distracting her attention and affections from the Tuileries and its inmates, and believing her to be under the protection of her kind friend, Madame Thibaut, I reconciled myself to my loneliness. When I rose in the morning, and found no Euphrosine to bless me with her sweet smiles, — and when at night no daughter bent her knee to me to crave my blessing in return, — I used to content myself with the thought that when the misfortunes of the royal family were happily alleviated, she would return to her father, — return to her home, — to her duty, — and prove once more the pride and comfort of my days.”

“ And wherefore should you now think otherwise, my good sir ? ” — said Madelon, touched by the faltering voice in which these words dropped from the lips of Delplanque. — “ Time, which brings round January and June in their due season, will settle all these difficulties. — The

king shall enjoy his own again, and our children be restored to us."

"Never will I again fold to my heart a girl who has proved a shame to the name of her father and the memory of her excellent mother!"

"Shame is a harsh word," observed Madelon, soothingly. "It might be counted indeed a rash measure for a young person to go wandering about a city like Paris in male attire, and ——"

"Male attire!" shouted the old man, furiously. "She who seemed so modest, so demure, that the young nobles who visited my *comptoir* could not so much as break a harmless jest touching the colour of their vest, or the fashion of their brocaded roquelaures in her presence! — Out on her hypocrisy!"

"But may I inquire," said Madelon, trusting that Delplanque's ire had expended itself, "through what interpretation you impute the levity displayed by Ma'amselle Euphrosine to the evil counsels of my son?"

"The thing is manifest enough, even without attaching importance to their previous good understanding — their secret meetings — their interchange of gifts and letters — of which I derive the certainty from the confession of my domestics. I told you I believed my daughter to have sought the guardianship of Madame Thibaut. But when I saw by every public document, a certification of the names of those who followed her majesty to the Feuillans and the Temple, I wrote to my successor in the Rue St. Honore, to prosecute inquiries on the subject. I had the pain of learning in reply, that no person of the name of Euphrosine Delplanque had been at any time included in the service of the Tuileries, or known as the inmate of the palace!"

"But I do not see in what manner this intelligence criminales my son?"

"Laporte, the intendant of the Navelles family, writes word that nothing has been heard at Florinethun of Made-moiselle Delplanque, since she thought proper to set off unattended and disguised into Lorraine in search of the foster-brother of Madame de St. Florentin, but that the said

capitaine denies all knowledge of the present position of the young lady."

"My son's word may be trusted," observed Madelon, with dignity.

"My daughter was traced to his residence, Madame Valazy; and since that period ——"

At this moment the door was slowly opened, and the figure of the Curé of Isques was slightly intruded.

"Ah! Monsieur Blaisel — deign to enter!" cried Madame Valazy; hoping by means of a stranger's presence, to give a more general turn to the conversation. "You have ridden far this morning, if I may judge by your wearied air."

"My sadness springs from other sources than those of bodily fatigue," said the good old man, waving his head. "A horrible massacre has taken place in Paris, and many thousand innocent victims have been slaughtered in cool blood!"

"Just Heaven!" exclaimed Madelon. — "Surely the National Guard ——"

"Are neither the objects nor the perpetrators of so foul a deed! — Your son has incurred neither danger nor reproach."

"Many thousand victims!" reiterated Delplanque. "My poor child — my misguided child — art *thou* among the sufferers from this new crime? — Oh! why didst thou leave thy father's protection, — who would have saved thee from all evil, — and who will receive his death-blow in any tidings of thy mischance!" — and he hastily traversed the chamber with clasped and trembling hands.

"A courier — *not* *bourgeoise* — a courier all the way from Montreuil!" cried Tonton, rushing into the chamber, and placing a letter in the hands of Madame Valazy.

"Jésus Maria!" cried Madelon, after perusing the first lines of the epistle. "What a horrible catastrophe! — Yet why should I make it a matter of lamentation, since it will bring those loved ones to my arms! — Monsieur le Curé! worthy Monsieur Delplanque! — rejoice with me — I shall see my son to-night. Camille is on his road to Manoir."

CHAPTER XIII.

The incendiary ! —
Creeping in stealthy malice through the night ;
While his dense cloak enshrouds a muffled torch
By demons kindled !

VANI.

For some preceding months, the inhabitants of the villages and p'ains round Meaux had exhibited unequivocal symptoms of unison with the democratic party of the capital ; confirmed and ripened into ferocity by the triumphant spectacle afforded by Louis XVI. and his family, dragged from Varennes to Paris. The National Guard, organised in these disaffected provinces, experienced danger and difficulty in restraining the peasantry within the already enlarged limits of subordination.

Day after day, new disorders in the domains of the nobles became the cause of further emigration. Châteaux were burnt and pillaged, — their defenceless inhabitants outraged, — their lands devastated by the very persons dependent for subsistence on the prosperity of their proprietors. Instead of labouring to efface the terrible consequences of the scanty harvests which for two successive years had menaced the provisionment of the capital, the culture of the land was neglected for the disorderly indulgence of political enmities ; and the produce of former seasons squandered in the wanton intoxication of the hour, by the destruction of the granaries of every obnoxious landholder throughout the district.

This afflicting intelligence had been partially communicated by Laporte to Camille Valazy, on the night he visited Florinethon with the Chevalier de Mirepoix. But the agitation of mind arising from his recent interview with the disguised Euphrosine in the prison of La Force, had prevented him from giving to the subject all that eager solicitude which, at any other moment, would have attached itself to details involving the interests of Emiline. He attributed, too, a considerable portion of the horrors of the

narrative, to the advanced age of the intendant, which rendered him susceptible of alarm on trivial occasions ; while in such emergencies there was no longer safety in relying on the statements of the public journals, which for the most part emanated from the enemy's camp, and were framed to forward the individual views of their proprietors.

Camille was aware that the caducity of the Duc de Navelles and the strict seclusion maintained by his daughter during her widowhood had in a great measure alienated the animosity of the populace from their persons ;—and he conceived that a feeble woman and a still more feeble old man were in no danger of provoking the enmity of the Jacobin party. This opinion might have been verified, but for the tempting bait still afforded by their opulence, and the intense detestation nourished against them by Maximilien Valazy.

Even when Laporte acquainted him that his cousin had recently visited Meaux, on occasion of some popular disturbance, and in spite of Madame de St. Florentin's reluctance, insisted upon access to her presence, his irritation subsided at the suggestion that the interview might be necessitated by the official duties of the deputy. But Camille's suspicions were now awakened ; and he determined to devote his first moments, after procuring the enlargement of Mademoiselle Delplanque, to an elucidation of the mystery. The intendant also hinted at a series of mysterious letters which madame la marquise was in the habit of receiving from Paris, and which never failed to plunge her into affliction for the remainder of the day.—Sometimes, he said, his noble lady would sit for hours leaning upon the shoulder of her cousin, Mademoiselle Léonie de Mirepoix, in the silence of utter despair.

But Laporte was not enabled to insinuate,—for the wounded pride of the marchioness retained so revolting a fact in the strict secrecy of her own bosom,—that the object of Maximilien Valazy, in seeking her presence, was to inform her that the Duc de Navelles and herself had been denounced to the conventional government as suspected persons,—convicted of maintaining correspondences treasonable to the nation with the young Count Amédée in

Sardinia ; that their estates were marked for proscription, and their persons for imprisonment ; and, finally, that her only chance of evading the terrible fate impending over herself and her family, was—to accept the offer of his protection, by granting him her hand in marriage!

The dismay of the marchioness on this startling proposal, was so great as to suspend the utterance of half her indignation ! She could scarcely believe herself awake or in a right frame of understanding ; for though she knew that the titles and privileges of the aristocracy, already virtually abolished, would shortly become obliterated from the charters of the land,—there existed in her estimation as vast a distinction between the daughter of the Duke of Navelles, and the peasant of Grand Moulin,—between the widow of the royalist St. Florentin, and the deputy of the Montagnard faction,—as between the children of frail mortality, and the disembodied spirits of a higher sphere ! —There was probably something of a woman's petulance in her mode of demonstrating this conviction to Maximilien Valazy ; for the sneer which disfigured his face as he listened to her burst of resentment was such as might have animated the physiognomy of Satan when meditating his projects of evil against the favoured creatures of his Maker.

But his projects were too deeply laid to be discountenanced by her opposition. The scorn of Emiline served to lend new bitterness to his intentions.

Though Maximilien no longer possessed that master-key to every movement, measure, and project of the Navelles family, which he held during the domestication of Flavie in the Hôtel de St. Florentin, he had emissaries in the village of Florinethun, and even in the inferior offices of the château, through whom he was acquainted with every important circumstance connected with the affairs of the establishment. The arrival of the Chevalier de Mirepoix under the escort of his officious cousin had not been kept a secret from him ; and only tended to inflame his animosities against both. It was in this frame of mind he encountered Camille, the day preceding the attack on the prisons ; and in the hope of mastering the further designs of Mirepoix, wormed out of him, by

promises of service, the secret of his interest in another prisoner within the predestined walls of La Force.

On quitting him, Maximilien hastened, not to the Committee of Public Safety to procure a certificate for his enlargement, but to the prison itself ; where, in the person of Jacquot Lavoine, he had no difficulty in recognising the hapless Euphrosine, whose active operations in the service of Marie Antoinette were well known to him, through Flavie Audicourt ; and whose claims on his wealthy cousin, he believed to be cemented by the tie of betrothment as his future wife.

Having gratified his vengeance by denouncing at La Force the sex of the disguised prisoner, he entered an especial prohibition against her release upon any ordinary judicial document ; and satisfied that the interest entertained by Camille in her favour would engross his personal defence so soon as the news of the slaughter in the various prisons became public, he conceived that no better moment could be selected for a renewal of his designs upon the château de Florinethun.

Though the mansion contained a small chapel dedicated to the devotions of the family, frequented by the infirm duke, and served by his confessor the Père D'essenne, who had hitherto escaped the enforcement of the new ecclesiastical oath or denouncement to the Assembly for its evasion, the piety of Madame de St Florentin induced her to attend the daily celebration of mass in the village church ; where, during the first year of her widowhood, her presence was greeted with affectionate respect. But these evidences soon began to relax. — Emiline, on her errands of devotion and charity in the village, found her ears assailed by coarse allusions, and invectives equally strange and terrible. Such were the consequences of the visits made by the Deputy Valazy to the commune of Meaux !

At length, neither her servants nor herself could venture to quit the château, from the apprehension of being insulted. The Duc de Navelles was no longer permitted to take the daily airing so essential to his infirm health ; and the walks of the little Emiline and Aglaë, the younger of whom was still an infant, were restricted by their attend-

ants within the boundaries of the garden. The arrival of the Chevalier de Mirepoix, instead of affording to Madame de St. Florentin the protection she anticipated, appeared to excite the evil will of the villagers into a still more determined opposition to the authority of the family ; and the day following his visit to Florinethun, threatening letters were thrown into the court-yard, and an address to the disaffected tenantry posted against the church-door, inviting them to throw off the yoke of the family of St. Florentin.

Their first overt act of defiance was the destruction of a small wood sloping from the château towards the river Marne, which disappeared in the course of twenty-four hours. The indignation of the Duc de Navelles on this insulting spoliation, induced him to apply to the authorities of Meaux for a detachment of the National Guard to be stationed at the château. But Madame de St. Florentin was not satisfied with such defence ; and having persuaded Laporte to undertake her errand, despatched him a second time to their friend and counsellor, with a letter, containing an intimation of their danger, and a statement of the alarming position of the village of Florinethun.

Had time been allowed to Camille Valazy to organise measures for the defence of the château, had he even received this intelligence at the early hour of Laporte's visit on the preceding day, he might have assembled a sufficient number of men among the mechanics thrown out of employ by the recent destruction of several important factories in the suburbs of Paris, to repel the meditated attack. But even with the certainty of maintaining this temporary advantage, he would have felt reluctant to encourage the obstinate residence of the Navelles family in so disturbed and excited a district. There appeared in this emergency, as in the strait arising from the connivance of the marquis in the flight of the king and queen, only the chance of rescuing Emiline and her children by an immediate escape from the fatal spot. In case of the duke's refusal to abandon Florinethun, he determined to place the rash old man in the guardianship of his nephew the Chevalier de Mirepoix, and carry off the marchioness and her daughters without leaving her a voice in the measure. Having sum-

moned Bauveau to his councils and intrusted him with a sufficient sum of money to carry his project into execution, he desired him to procure horses to render him independent of the post-stations, and proceed with a carriage to Florinethun; sending forward relays, so as to cross by Senlis to the Calais road, and avoid the necessity of re-entering Paris.

Bauveau, sincerely attached to the master, whom he still hoped would eventually return to the city of the loom, and terminate his days in a showy Hôtel Valazy on the Place Bellecour, after a prosperous union with the heiress of the house of Dacquin, vainly endeavoured to dissuade him from rushing into needless danger. Having learned from old Laporte, the preceding day, the imminency of the danger menacing the inhabitants of Florinethun, he assured him that by this time the chateau was probably in ashes, and the family pursuing their flight to the frontier, where the Chevalier de Mirepoix was about to join the army of Condé; and implored his master to reflect on the dangers and horrors from which he had that day barely escaped.

"If I rightly understand your orders, sir, it is your intention to accompany the Florinethun family to Manoir," said Bauveau. "The young lady on whom my wife is attending, will therefore be left unprotected to the malice of those from whom you have with so much difficulty rescued her."

"No! Bauveau. Return with the horses about to carry me to Meaux. Act for me during my absence, till you receive further instructions. In any future difficulty, apply to my notary for assistance and advice; and should I fall in the course of these disorders, he will regulate every thing for your satisfaction, and the advantage of my family."

Again Bauveau remonstrated. But his arguments were met with so much decision on the part of his master, that the man, instead of pursuing his objections, found himself compelled to set off in search of the horses; while Camille, after appointing a more explicit place of rendezvous,

mounted his own ; and, followed by Marmin, was out of sight in a moment.

In order to reach the gate of the *barrière St. Martin*, — that spot already a scene of so much interest to his feelings, — he was compelled to pass a part of the *Faubourg*, in which he encountered a band of ruffians, evidently returning from their horrible operations at the *Conciergerie* and wearing the fatal cognisance. — But Camille had no time to indulge his sympathy with the defenceless beings at that moment under the edge of the sword. — Florinethun was before his eyes, exposed to all the terrors of Maximilien's powerful vengeance, and the excesses of an infuriated multitude !

He had long since, as a precautionary measure, enrolled young Marmin in his troop of the National Guard ; and though he had procured his discharge at the moment of his own resignation, both re-assumed, on the present occasion the national uniform ; so that neither surprise nor inquiry was excited by their activity at so early an hour in the villages lying between Claye and Meaux.

On entering the cross road leading from the latter town along the banks of the Marne towards the *château*, Camille — to whom the aspect of Florinethun was familiar — observed the loss of the fine wood which formerly fringed the rising ground towards the avenue. But, alas ! a dark lurid vapour was rising into the autumnal clearness of the morning sky, in the immediate direction of the *château* !

“ On, for your life, Toinon ! ” exclaimed Valazy, pushing his horse towards a dike which separated the road from a field to be traversed by a short cut towards the village. “ On for your life ! Dismount in the market-place, and spread a report that we precede a detachment of the national cavalry from Paris, despatched for the protection of the *chateau*, confiscated as national property ! ”

A few minutes afterwards, Camille entered the courtyard of Florinethun ! During the night, disorderly bands from the neighbouring *commune*, aided, as it afterwards appeared, by more regularly organised companies of depredators from the capital, had been busied with the spoliation of the *château*. As in most instances of popular excess, they had not contented themselves with the gratification of

their rapacity, in the removal of the valuables placed within their reach ; but the property it was impossible to abstract, was condemned to total destruction. Around the château, therefore, both in the court-yard and on the terraces, were scattered fragments and piles of splendid decorations, — heir-looms, through succeeding generations, of the St. Florentin family, — the produce of foreign travel, foreign achievements, and the liberal patronage of national talent. Shattered mirrors were visible among the disorder, whose frames, precipitated from the windows above, proclaimed the most precious specimens of Venetian industry ; tattered remnants of the beautiful tissues of the Gobelins, torn in wantonness from the walls of the state-saloons ; and far more precious than all, portraits of a line of honoured ancestors, — of statesmen, warriors, and beauties whose names belong to history, and whose persons had sought a more palpable immortality at the hands of Titian, Vandyke, Rigaud, Mignard, or Greuze, — were seen fluttering in canvas strips, among heaps of fractured mouldings, gilt entablatures, and fragments of porcelain.

Among these, at scattered intervals, lay piles of human bodies, which Camille mistook at first sight for the victims of an affray ; but, on a nearer inspection, he found them, with the exception of some ten or twelve murdered retainers of the castle, to consist of living members of the insurgent party, disabled by brutal intoxication. He had no difficulty in tracing their condition to the vast hogsheads of precious wines, which had been rolled into the court-yard, and devoted to the revelry of the assailants, until the inebriated hand of the wassailer forgot its duty, and the contents were suffered to run unchecked and foaming on the pavement, in horrible commixture with the blood of their fellow-creatures, recently spilled upon the spot. Dozens of flaring waxen flambeaux were stuck against the wasting barrels of Bourdeaux ; affording a strange contrast with the bright beams of the morning sun, and a record of the sacrilegious defiance which had snatched them from the consecrated stores of the chapel and its altars.

These incongruous objects were scarcely comprehended in

the hasty glance which Camille Valazy threw over the scene ; for his eyes rested on an incident of this loathsome spectacle obliterating the trace of every other outrage. Under the platform of the double flight of marble steps leading to the state entrance of the château, the ruffians had placed one of the gilded fauteuils from the saloon : in which, fastened with cords, was seated the mutilated body of the Duc de Navelles :—before him, a *prie-dieu* with a breviary upon the desk, and propped on its knees at his feet, in an attitude of menial servility, the corpse of Laporte, his faithful and grey-headed servitor of half a century !

The blood of Camille ran cold in his veins when he perceived that the right arm of the murdered duke was suspended high above his head ; and that the hand had been severed from the stump whose mutilated remains piteously exhibited the withered attenuation attendant on the extreme age of the noble victim.—In that act of aggravated barbarity, he read the fulfilment of Maximilien's early denunciation ! The ruin of Florinethun had evidently arisen from the malignant operations of his cousin !

Averting his eyes from this terrible object, he cast them round in agonised search of those whom he feared must have shared the unspeakable calamities of the hour.

“ Let me but look on her bleeding remains to wind up to its extreme pitch the anguish of my soul ! ”—muttered Valazy. “ Let me but satiate my maddened eyes with the butchery of my beloved, and then for vengeance on the monster who has wrought this tissue of crime ! ”

But there was no trace of female existence amid the horrors of the scene !—The flames bursting with fierce tongues of fire above the desolated pile proceeded from the offices, and had begun to communicate with the *corps de logis*. But a slight vapour of smoke was perceptible from the grand entrance, as if the conflagration alone respected the outraged human relics stationed there in horrible mockery of the authority of the dead.

Camille held his breath as he exclaimed to a reeling soldier, who was pointing out the progress of the fire to a few peasants still wandering among the ruins,—“ And the

women, comrade, — where are the females of the family? Surely *they* are not included in the massacre?"

"More or less," replied the man, doggedly. "There was a kitchen-wench who refused to discover ——"

"But the marchioness — the children?" —

"The aristocrats? — Why you see, as the Dame de Florentin, and her pretty kinswoman and dainty brats, could not be persuaded to join us good fellows in broaching the cognac, we provided her with a good fire to keep off the chill of the night air. She is warming her hands finely over the embers by this time. I hunted her myself as far as the parapet, and lost her at last among the wilderness of turrets and chimneys. But though *I* could not reach her, the flames will!" —

He looked up to the roof of the château as he spoke; and Camille distinctly perceived at the juncture of the gables of the wing, two or three cowering female figures. — His companion also discerned the distant objects of their baffled search; and calling loudly to his troop, a volley of carbines was instantly discharged in that direction.

"I knew not, *morbleu!* that doves and gulls could make out so lofty a perch," said the soldier, proceeding to re-load his piece. "But if I cannot reach them at a fair mark, I shall scarcely venture through the flames rushing yonder through the galleries, in order to snatch so paltry a prize; no! not even at the price offered by the citizen député, who is skulking at Meaux. I have risked my neck more than enough, *peste!* in running after her among the roofs."

Valazy had vanished from his side. Already he was traversing the volumes of smoke which filled the staircase of the château; already, from corridor to grenier, he had attained the entrance leading to the leads. Trembling lest the sight of an approaching soldier should terrify the marchioness into some act of desperation, and perhaps startle her into throwing herself from the parapet, he strove to announce the arrival of a friend, by calling aloud in every varied accent of tenderness — "Emiline — dearest Emiline! I come to protect you — to protect your

children. — Emiline ! — my own — my beloved ! — You have friends at hand ! ”

It was the first time such words of endearment had escaped his lips ; — alas ! what a moment for the declaration of his long-repressed attachment !

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

VOLUME THE THIRD.

CHAPTER I.

Écartonnez, grands Dieux ! de la terre ou non sommes,
Quiconque avec plaisir repand le sang des hommes. VOLTAIRES.

It was at the close of evening on the same day, that Madame de St. Florentin, on recovering from the state of mental torpor by which she was overwhelmed, discovered herself to be in a travelling carriage on an unknown route.

She had been snatched in a state almost amounting to mental alienation from her perilous position, by the intrepid hand of Valazy ; and carried in his arms through the circling smoke, whose eddies filled the interior of the château, while Marmin possessed himself, at his master's bidding, of her two children. The female companions of Madame St. Florentin, consisting of her cousin, Léonie de Mirepoix, and Louise, the attendant of the little girls, gratefully obeyed the directions of the two soldiers who thus opportunely presented themselves for their defence ; following with trembling steps through the suffocating vapours of the spreading conflagration, till they found themselves standing by the side of Camille on the threshold of the garden-entrance of the château. Mademoiselle de Mirepoix still retaining her presence of mind, unmaddened by the maternal anxiety which redoubled the terrors of Emilie, suggested that, as the gardens were invested by the national soldiers, they should be arrested in attempting to traverse the very first alley ; and hastily revealed to Valazy the existence of a side-door opening from the *salle à manger* to the offices, through which it might be still possible to gain the woods of Florinethun.

“ But the offices are a heap of smoking ruins. The

burning rafters are falling in every direction. You saw it, mademoiselle, from the roof, as well as myself," cried the children's attendant.

"So much the better!" — cried Valazy, following the path pointed out by Mademoiselle de Mirepoix; — "the less likely to meet with stragglers loitering in that direction."

With the glare of insanity, Madame de St. Florentin gazed on the wilderness of desolation through which she was hastily borne along, half smothered by the scorching atmosphere, and every moment intercepted by masses of smouldering ruins, which suddenly threw up a column of flames as fragments of blazing timber fell with a tremendous crash from the roof, through the devastated framework of the building.

"Toinon, keep close! — another moment and we are safe!" cried Camille, as they reached a spot, where the reflection of the flames was less fierce, but where a dense vapour of black and pungent smoke revealed their vicinity to the stables and granaries, where the forage gave out in burning the most oppressive exhalations.

Yet it was here they encountered the first living being visible during their progress through the scene of peril and horror. On perceiving a human figure skulking among the smouldering outhouses, Camille drew a pistol from his bosom, with a hand which, with some difficulty, he extricated from Emiline's support. But he was arrested by Mademoiselle de Mirepoix's assurance that the man was one of the postilions of the duke; to whom she made a friendly sign to join their party.

They soon reached the postern opening from the stable-court into the woods. But Camille had the mortification of finding it torn from its hinges; while the underwood and high grass without, trodden down in every direction, proved that it had been made the common entrance of the mutineers from the village, and therefore afforded little promise of security to the fugitives. Any prospect, however, was preferable to return; and having broken a way through the thickest covert of the hazel-bushes, followed with pain and difficulty by his trembling companions, Va-

lazy marshalled their way towards a small patch of holly trees completely screened by entangled furze from the frequented paths of the wood.

Having motioned to the little party to preserve the most cautious silence, he carefully deposited Madame de St. Florentin, whose mind was now completely alienated, on a bed of moss and fern; then, turning to reconnoitre the condition of his companions, he perceived that Antoine Marmin, whose hair and the shoulder of whose uniform were singed and blackened, carried but *one* of the children in his arms!—Fearful of calling the attention of the marchioness to this appalling fact, he motioned an inquiry after little Emilie; but Toinon, who had no tact to enter into the delicacies of the case, exclaimed aloud, “*Ah! Jésus not’ bon Sauveur!* I fear we shall see no more of the *petite demoiselle!* Her nurse snatched her from my arms when I was entangled in the flaming rafters, and I lost sight of them in the smoke!”

“Not another word!”—said Valazy, in a low emphatic tone; and having stationed Toinon and the young postilion at the entrance of the thicket, and regardless of the prayers of Mademoiselle de Mirepoix that he would not abandon them, he hurried back through the path they had quitted, and re-entered the postern of the lower court. But, alas! no vestige of the little innocent or her attendant; and just as Camille was pressing onwards towards the spot where he remembered to have been struck by the cries of the women during their transit, a horrible crash, succeeded by a new burst of flames and a suffocating emission of smoke and dust, proclaimed that the roof and outer wall of the offices had fallen. No hope remained of discovering the objects of his search, who were probably crushed in the ruins.

Heart-sickened by this painful consideration, and oppressed almost to fainting by the noxious vapours, Camille re-directed his flight towards the wood; where perceiving that in the direction of the holly thicket all was still and deserted, he attempted to skirt the plantations towards the road, and ascertain whether any traces were visible of Bauveau and the carriage,—to the arrival of which he

looked as the sole chance for the surviving inmates of Florinethun.

Panting with agitation, he attained a hillock on the outskirts of the wood, which commanded the route in either direction. But the only objects that met his view were a group of drunken labourers, reeling towards the village, roaring snatches of the Marseillaise, and sinking under the weight of burdens evidently forming part of the pillage of the château. Further on, he discerned the body of a man half concealed in the rushes of a ditch by the roadside, which, for a moment, he believed to be that of his unfortunate domestic; but as he was leaping into the road to satisfy his anxiety, he detected, at the extremity of an opposite field, the carriage of which he was in search, making its way with some difficulty along the cart-track of the traversée. Instantly hailing Bauveau, whom he joyfully recognised upon the driving-seat, Valazy motioned to him to advance no further, dreading that the appearance of an equipage on the Florinethun road might excite suspicion; but flying back to the thicket, and taking once more into his arms the burden rendered doubly precious by the perils of the hour, he succeeded in guiding his companions in safety towards the place of rendezvous.—They crossed the road without molestation. In another minute, the marchioness, her child, and Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, were deposited in the carriage.

“My servant Toinon must, with your permission, become your companion,” whispered Valazy to Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, who was supporting the senseless form of her cousin. “I will occupy the seat by the coachman till we attain the Calais road. *You*, Bauveau, must also accompany us. No chance of finding my horses at the château, now in the possession of the brigands!” —

“Pardon me, sir,” said Bauveau.—“For both our sakes it is requisite I should return to Paris without delay. I have friends at Meaux from whom I can easily obtain a conveyance.”

“As you will, my good and faithful servant,” said Camille, giving him his hand. “The time admits not of thanks,—but rely on my future gratitude.”

"One word more!" interposed the young man, with moistened eyes. "The children of madame la marquise;—surely you placed but *one* in the carriage?"—

"Hush!" said Camille, cautiously; "the other is missing. But I implore you, Bauveau, quit not the neighbourhood of Meaux till you have recovered the little girl."

Camille now gave the signal for departure; and notwithstanding the deliberate pace at which the vehicle was compelled to follow the deep cart-ruts of the route, Camille could discover no trace of the fugitives. Satisfied, however, that he could intrust the prosecution of the search to the faithful and humane Bauveau, he uttered another hasty word of farewell to his worthy domestic, and the vehicle proceeded at a more rapid rate of speed along the lofty avenue skirting the road towards Senlis. At the first inn, where a relay waited his arrival, Camille made out a formal certificate, which assigned him an apparent authority of arrest over the little party, in case inquiry should arise among the provincial authorities; while his own appearance on the box, armed, and wearing the national uniform, and that of a soldier of the National Guard with the ladies within, gave an air of probability to the plot.

Meanwhile, Emiline remained wholly unconscious of the situation of her affairs.

"Better, far better, that it should be thus with her!" said Léonie de Mirepoix to her distressed companion. "During this torpor of mind and body, nature will re-invigorate her powers, to meet the grievous tidings which await her."

"Hush!" whispered Valazy—"she may possibly overhear you."

"No! her slumbers are as heavy as the wreck of every shattered nerve can render them! Suffer me, therefore, Monsieur Valazy, before I thank you for the valueless life which I feel I owe to your interposition, to express the gratitude of my family for the liberation of my brother. Despatched by my uncle into Lorraine, to ascertain the condition of his estate of Navelles, poor Reginald will return to-morrow to Florincethun, to find it a pile of

ruins, and to imagine his family and friends buried beneath !”

Valazy, with all his generosity of mind, could scarcely prevail on himself to sympathise in the afflictions of Madame de St. Florentin's favourite cousin.

“Bewildered as I am,” resumed Léonie, after a pause, “by all the horrible scenes I have lately witnessed, I have never inquired, Monsieur Valazy, to what shelter you are about to conduct us. We are on the route to Calais. Tell me, is emigration inevitable? Must we indeed fly to England?”

“I trust not!” replied Valazy. “I cannot but hope that the flagrancy of the crimes recently committed in Paris will call forth a severity of retribution such as must terminate the licentious career of revolutionary violence. Meanwhile, mademoiselle, the humble residence of my mother, who inhabits a farm in the neighbourhood of Samer, must afford a refuge for those to whom she will eagerly devote the affectionate attentions their condition may require.”

Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, an orphan from her birth, who, like most of the daughters of the nobility, had been educated at Panthémont with the view of eventually uniting her destinies with those of her cousin Amédée de Navelles, knew little of the connection of the Valazy family with that of her uncle. Camille perceiving her air of surprise, proceeded with his explanations.

“My mother, mademoiselle, was many years a domestic servant to the Duc de Navelles. The devotion you have seen me apply to the assistance of the Marchioness de St. Florentin derives its warmth from the kindness with which, in former days, she deigned to accept the services of her foster-brother.”

“Ah! it is Madelon, then, of whom I have heard my uncle and cousins speak,—it is Madelon who will afford us a home in our misfortunes?—I am satisfied! Poor Emiline will derive the utmost comfort from the presence of one whom she loves as a mother.”

Camille was gratified by this unpremeditated corroboration of Madame de St. Florentin's fidelity to her early

connections. He had the satisfaction of seeing his tired companions visited by slumbers as heavy as those of the child whose little head was pillowed in his bosom ; and even ventured to afford them a few hours' respite from their fatigues, at Abbeville ; whence he despatched the courier to his mother, announcing their immediate arrival. Late in the evening of the second day, the little party traversed the avenue of Manoir.

CHAPTER II.

Still harping on my daughter ?

Hamlet

THOUGH unaware of the afflicting state of the marchioness, Madelon had pre-arranged her immediate removal to her sleeping room, which Emilie persisted in mistaking for her apartment at Versailles. Addressing her trembling old nurse as Madame de Tourzel, and Mademoiselle de Mirepoix as the Comtesse Paulme, she solicited an immediate audience of Marie Antoinette, —assuring them that the absence of St. Florentin was caused by his imprisonment in the hands of Maximilien Valazy. It was only on their entreaty that she would defer the interview until morning, as her majesty had retired to rest, that the poor maniac, instead of exhibiting the refractory petulance which Madelon anticipated, suffered herself to be undressed, and lay quietly down to sleep.

Meanwhile Camille, though he had attained that long-wished for haven of security in which he had latterly despaired of placing the beloved object of his solitudes, was greeted on his arrival by fresh vexations. Among the persons assembled at the foot of the avenue of Manoir to greet the arrival of the carriage, the importunate presence of old Delplanque,—who, on the announcement of the coming guests, insisted on remaining to seek further explanations relative to his daughter,—forced itself upon

his notice. He observed the old mercer busying himself with a thousand officious directions to Tonton as to the most advantageous mode of turning the carriage in the little court, and the best position for the lanterns which were to enlighten the path of its inmates; and he was even commencing a long oration to the bewildered Emiline, with the offer of the "*l'hommage de son plus profond respect*," when Madelon unceremoniously pushed him by the shoulders into the sitting-room, and turned the key so as to rescue from his officious curiosity the terrible spectacle of Madame de St. Florentin's afflictions.

The first precautionary measure taken by Valazy after dismissing the post-horses, was to distribute arms to Antoine Marmin, to Benoît the postilion, and Tonton, and cause the gates of the avenue and court to be locked and barred; while, before the latter, a broken cart was so disposed as to prevent the appearance of recent passage. After these operations, he was proceeding to seek refreshment in the chamber devoted to his use at Manoir, when, in passing along the corridor, his ears were assailed by violent attempts from within to break down the door of the *salle à manger*. His first movement was to lay his hand on the pistol in his bosom, under a persuasion that the house was attacked, his next, to recoil with horror in the dread that these acts of violence might proceed from the delirious excitement of Madame de St. Florentin. Both apprehensions were calmed in a moment by the sound of a thousand execrations and accusations, uttered in the voice of the irate Sieur Delplanque; who, though little inclined to the liberal side in politics, mingled a variety of adjurations touching the liberties of the subject and the rights of man, in the recapitulation of his grievances!

Nor did the indignation of the furious old gentleman subside, when he found himself indebted for his release from durance to the interference of Monsieur le Capitaine Valazy; and for some minutes, his remonstrances touching his incarceration and the abduction of his daughter were so singularly and inextricably blended, that Camille judged it best to allow the explosion of his verbosity to expend itself, ere he attempted explanation or apology. But

the great soul of the mercer waxed hot within him ; and it was some time before the humming-top gave any symptoms of weariness in its vibrations.

“ I—sir,” said he, “ *moi qui vous parle*—I—Jean—Thomas—Alexandre Delplanque—a name well-known at the court of Versailles, —I received you, sir, in ingenuous confidence, into the bosom of my family ; —made your provincial obscurity worthy acceptance in the high circle of the court of France, —feasted you under my domestic roof-tree, —cherished you during the tedious hours of sickness !—When others would have shunned a young *éventé*, whom the common voice of fame had reprobated with the name of assassin, —when others ——”

“ Pardon me, sir, for interrupting a recapitulation of favours which I am far from inclined to deny, to solicit an immediate explanation of your accusations against my conduct towards a young lady, whom I am grieved to hear inculpated in groundless and offensive insinuations.”

“ How, sir ! Do you presume to deny the fact of having decoyed Mademoiselle Euphroisine Delplanque into becoming your companion in Lorraine, —your inmate in Paris, —your ——”

“ I deny nothing !— I have nothing to say to so absurd a charge !”—replied Camille, fearful that the old man’s vociferations would reach the ears, and disturb the rest of his unhappy guests. “ The wretchedness of four sleepless nights, of four days distracted by the most atrocious spectacles of crime and misery, oppress my mind beyond all power of controverting your accusations. But a person has fortunately accompanied me to Manoir, who was at once an eye-witness of the one brief interview which occurred between Mademoiselle Delplanque and myself at Boisgelin, and of the frightful circumstances under which she sought an asylum in my dwelling at Paris.”

And having commanded the attendance of young Marmin, Camille referred to *his* evidence all further explanation on the subject ; while the fretful old man, although satisfied that no collusion could have been practised between the master and man, expressed himself highly discontented with the result of his cross-examination.

"I perfectly agree with you, sir," observed Camille, coolly. "that the situation of your daughter in my abode is indecorous, and her stay in Paris perilous to her own safety. I therefore presume to recommend that you depart instantly for the capital, and restore her to the respectability afforded by your own protection. The diligence from Calais passes the end of the avenue of Manoir at midnight."

"You are right, sir," said Delplanque, haughtily, as he accepted the written address tendered him by Camille.— "You are right, Monsieur Valazy; though others might have felt the reluctance of delicacy in enforcing such an argument under their own roof, and at the approach of night. But I have the honour, sir, of bidding you farewell, and of assuring you that I shall find a moment to verify the truth of your account; ay, sir, and in case of any false entry, render you severely accountable for the balance due to the indignation of an injured father."

Valazy was too much exhausted to recommence his explanations. Begging his irritated innkeeper to issue such orders in the house as might suit his comfort and convenience, he hastened to throw his weary frame upon a bed; and long before Monsieur Delplanque and his valise had been guided by Tonton along the avenue towards the Calais road, his feverish susceptibility was calmed into profound sleep.

"The events we eagerly desire," says La Bruyère, "rarely occur; or they happen at a moment and under circumstances which diminish the pleasure they originally promised."

If Camille Valazy, from his first hour of maturity till the present, could have pointed out a hope dear to his heart, an event desirable beyond his most sanguine expectations, it would have been the power of conferring an important obligation on Madame de St. Florentin. But, alas! this eager wish had been gratified at the expense of the cruel sacrifice of her father,—the loss of her child;—and how little might it avail to soften her feelings towards himself!—The exertions he had effected in the preservation of her life would for the future be inextricably connected in her mind with a catastrophe, such as she must naturally

labour to efface from her recollection. Even his prompt obedience to her summons in the hour of danger, would be shunned amid the cruel reminiscences attached to the destruction of Florinethun.

So eagerly—so enduringly—as he had wished to behold her sheltered with her family in the tranquil seclusion of his mother's farm,—so long as he had considered Manoir devoted to her accommodation!—*And now she was there*,—beneath the same roof,—separated from him but by a wall,—watched by the mother who had cherished the infancy of both!—Her destiny was connected with his by a *closer* bond of union than he had ever ventured to anticipate;—and yet she appeared a thousand times more divided from him, than as the heiress of Navelles,—as the wife of St. Florentin!—At that period, he had looked on Emiline as so guarded round by friends and protectors, that there was no danger in the intensity of his affection,—that he might render her, without hesitation, the idol of his secret heart. But now that she was protected only by the sacred halo of misfortune,—that she had no longer a father,—a husband,—to repel the presumption of his gaze, he felt as if a wall of ice were interposed between them;—that an empress upon her throne could not be more elevated above his head;—and that even the attentions due from him to his guests must be paid with the strictest reserve, lest they be regarded as an intrusion arising from their dependent condition.

Her health too,—dare he hope that the broken heart already withered by distress, would bear up against the miseries yet demanding fortitude?—Could he expect that the vacant, wandering eye which he had now gazed upon for hours without attracting its recognition, would resume the sweet intelligence of its former glance?—that the fair cheek, blanched into the hue and temperature of marble, would become re-animated into the youthful glow of health and beauty?—Would she ever smile again, as in the holyday of her wedded happiness; ever waken anew to the joys of human existence?

Alas! he was hopeless of such a change! The hideous dreams which soon distracted his rest were scarcely so

much the result of the agitation and fatigue he had undergone, as of his desponding anticipations touching the future destiny of his afflicted Emiline !

The following morning chanced to be one of those intensely bright autumnal sunshines, which, instead of cheering the heart like the brilliancy of the early spring, serve only to remind us that they embellish the latest festivals of the closing year ;— that its best smiles are gone to swell the treasury of past recollections, irrevocably abstracted from the sum of our earthly existence !— The hues of the decaying leaves, — the mournful fragrance of a few scattered flowers half withered by the frosty night air, — the sharpness of the distant landscape, — the unnatural transparency of the atmosphere, — are but memorials of the departure of another summer !

To the inmates of Manoir, these associations assumed a character of still more definite melancholy ! It was not alone the sweetness and gladness of the year which had fled from their enjoyment with the fleeting season. Worldly prosperity, — the best affections of the heart, — the firmest reliances of the mind, — were included in the wreck !— The institutions of their native land were broken up, — its moral union disorganised beyond redemption, — its name tarnished in the records of history ; while their own homes were made desolate, — their kindred precipitated into the grave. These miseries appeared to jar against the feelings of the youthful Léonie for the first time, when she gazed from the window of Manoir upon its little garden basking in the sunshine, and upon the tranquil valley beyond, in whose narrow pastures the cattle were rising lazily from their dewy lair. All seemed so tranquil, so monotonously soft and calm. Nature appeared to luxuriate with such unmolested security in the stillness of that obscure retreat, that she felt with a redoubled sense of wonder and injury, the infuriated turbulence prompting the inhabitants of the metropolis to such intemperance of crime.

What a contrast ! — The roaring of the fierce multitude in the court-yard of Florinethun, — the flashing and rattling of the discharges of musketry against the windows,

the darkening volumes of smoke,—the groans and shrieks of the little band of faithful followers which had remained true to its dying *seigneur*,—the fierce imprecations of the populace,—the crackling flames gathering from wing to wing of that beautiful pile,—had subsided into the holy tranquillity of a lonely valley,—into the murmur of the morning breeze among the elm-trees, the hum of Madelon's bees clustered over lofty bushes of the Michaelmas daisy, united with the twittering of the birds which had suspended their "procreant cradles" from the little turret in which her chamber was situated!—Willingly would she have persuaded herself that the past was a hideous chimaera. Terrible realities were intermingled with her reminiscences, which forbade the delusion! From the parapet where Madame de St. Florentin's local knowledge of Florinethun had fortunately pointed out a secure refuge from the search of the populace, Léonie had discerned the insults offered to the remains of the Duc de Navelles; and beheld the savage immolation of his faithful Laporte, by the hirelings of Maximilien Valazy!

The condition of Madame de St. Florentin, too, was a direful corroboration of the veracity of her recollections; and though Mademoiselle de Mirepoix confidently anticipated the recovery of the child and her cousin's eventual restoration to sense and composure, she was overcome with the consciousness of her friendless and destitute condition, and the necessity of relying on the mercy of comparative strangers for the succours so much needed by the unhappy Emiline. The first instigations of her heart, however, were those of gratitude; and her morning salutations to Valazy expressed sincere and eager acknowledgments of her obligations, and those of her cousin.

"I will not shrink, mademoiselle," said Camille, in reply, "from professions which appear to relieve your feelings. But speak not to me, I conjure you, of the *obligations* of Madame de St. Florentin! The ties which bind us together are of too ancient and sacred an origin to permit the existence of such a word between us."

Meanwhile could any thing have increased the intense emotion excited in the heart of Madelon, by the condition

of the Marquise de St. Florentin, it would have been that it owed its origin to the malicious wickedness of Maximilien Valazy. Excepting in a trifling disturbance in the village of Navelles arising from the instigation of the same evil spirit, poor Madelon had witnessed nothing of the progress of the Revolution. She had quitted Grand Moulin rather in obedience to the counsels of Laporte and the prayers of her son, than from personal apprehensions ; and amid the tranquil routine of her cares at Manoir, the gossip of the good Curé Blaisel and the tremendous narrative put forth by Jean Thomas Alexandre Delplanque failed to impress upon her mind the horrors of the reality. — She persuaded herself that her informants gained their intelligence from the public journals, the hired organs of faction.

But Mademoiselle de Mirepoix's shuddering revelations admitted of no further doubt. The poor old duke, her ancient benefactor, — Laporte, her coadjutor in fidelity and trust, — had been sacrificed to the bloodthirsty animosity of the populace. — Florinethun, — that historical monument of family importance, — Florinethun was in ashes ; — the good, the gallant St. Florentin in his grave ; — and his child, his lovely and innocent child, abandoned to the murderous hatred of her father's enemies ! — But of all these evils, — great as they were, — and appalling, and humiliating, — none struck upon her heart like the aspect of the marchioness. Throughout the night of her arrival, Madelon refreshed her vigils in tears ; and when in the morning she was greeted by her precious charge with the gracious smiles and sportive tones she was in the habit of bestowing on her favourite *femme de chambre*, for whom she persisted in mistaking her good old nurse, but who was now, alas ! lying cold and stiff among the ruins of Florinethun, — Madame Valazy wrung her hands in utter dismay at the terrible havoc before her eyes.

Soon, very soon, this cheerful mood of Emiline's deepened into extravagant gaiety. She laughed and sung, and called aloud on the familiar names of those whose ears were for ever closed against the sound ; and at length burst into peals of ungovernable and frightful laughter ; then on a sudden, without any visible motive for the tran-

sition, checked her mirth, and subsided into her former state of lethargic despondency. A thoughtful scowl was on her brow ; yet it was evident that the operations of her mind were wholly suspended. And in this condition did poor Madelon sit by her side ; attempting to soothe her into a more natural mood, by the fondest terms of motherly endearment ; and holding between her own that fair white hand which she had seen enlarge from the waxen and diminutive softness of infancy into the graceful symmetry of womanhood. How often had Madelon fondled it in the unwitting playfulness of her childhood !—And now, Emiline was again before her eyes, —helpless and witless as a child !

While Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, sharing her anxieties, suggested a thousand modes to attract the attention of the sufferer, and direct her thoughts into their natural channel, Camille having despatched Tonton to Samer to inquire for letters, resolved to traverse the meadows towards Isques, in the hope of obtaining from the curé some intelligence of the progress of the Prussian troops, and the march of public events at Paris. He knew that Blaisel, from his access to the neighbouring châteaux of MM. de Campaigno and Rosamel, was acquainted with the popular movements ; and having warned Benoît and Antoine to be on the alert in case of the appearance of strangers, and left them, briquet in hand, seated upon the trunk of a fallen tree near the head of the avenue, mutually recounting the horrors they had recently witnessed and the miracles of valour they had enacted, Valazy leapt over the stile leading beside the banks of the Lianne towards the Condette warren, through the village of Isques, —a path where all was stillness, solitude, and peace !

Of all vicissitudes, none so striking as a sudden removal from the haste, intemperance, and tumult, of a populous city, to the loneliness of a country landscape ; —a loneliness where nothing appears to intervene betwixt our hearts and heaven !—Amid the hurry of a metropolis, we close our ears against that still small voice which in the silence of the fields speaks as with the stirring tone of a trumpet ;—that voice which, in the hearing of the first

murderer, assumed the terrors of a rebuke spoken by the lips of the Almighty !

While Valazy hurried along those solitary meadows, where it was easy to doubt the very existence of the tumultuous throng of the capital, his thoughts were less of the marvellous chain of events through which Emiline de Navelles had been fated to realise his vision of abiding under his protection as a persecuted and distracted fugitive, than of the desperate wickedness of the human heart when left to its unrestrained devices, as exemplified by the assassins of La Force, the ravagers of Florinethun !

Although he had attempted to tranquillise the mind of the agitated Mademoiselle de Mirepoix during her journey by discouraging the project of emigration, he was secretly persuaded that the malice of Maximilien Valazy would neglect no means of searching out his destined victims ; and having been made acquainted by Léonic with the designs of the ruffian on the hand of her cousin, his feelings of loathing and horror assured him that there was no safety on the soil of France for the lovely object of his idolatry. It was no difficult matter to quit the country, now that the vicinity of the ocean and the auspiciousness of the skies combined to favour their departure. But with the prospect of speedily re-uniting her favourite child to the little group, he felt unwilling to profit by the helpless and unresisting condition of the unfortunate Madame de St. Florentin, to remove her from a country still endeared to her by the possession of that cherished treasure ; and resolved to suspend the preparations of their flight till some conclusive intelligence from Bauveau satisfied his mind of the safety of little Emiline.

Nor were his apprehensions diminished by the information which awaited him from the good curé, that the administration of Paris had addressed circulars to the different communes of the republic, inviting the departments to follow the example of the capital, and evacuate their prisons by a general massacre of the captive aristocracy ; stating that the Parisians, on the eve of marching to meet the enemy, had determined on the extermination of a party

which they must otherwise leave behind to slaughter their wives and children.

The curé aggravated the apprehensions of his visiter by a confession that a spirit of disaffection had begun to manifest itself in the adjoining valley, and that several considerable families of the commune had already sought safety in emigration. The inhabitants of Artois and the north of Picardy having forfeited through the evacuation of the country the crowd of English residents from time immemorial the source of their prosperity, began to turn for vengeance upon those whom they regarded as the origin of this sudden deprivation. Our aristocrats, said the fickle Boulonnais, have deprived us of work, of pay, of food;—we will seek retribution at their hands, by nourishing our destitution from their substance.

“In short,” continued the curé, with an air of profound resignation, “I feel assured that a day of reckoning is at hand; and though prepared to tarry here and encounter such difficulties and perils as the Almighty may have decreed, so long as I entertain the least hope of restraining by the shepherd’s voice a single lamb of my flock within the fold of heaven, I cannot feel myself justified in counselling your prolonged stay at Manoir. Madame Valazy, by her benevolence and simplicity of mind and manners, has acquired the affection and esteem of every class throughout the district, and forms no part of the obnoxious race. But your unfortunate friends, sir, would be easily recognised as fugitive nobles from some other department; and, in affording a harbour for their safety, your good mother might endanger her own. Females, Monsieur Valazy, have no longer a portion in this fated land; and since their presence can in nought avail to its deliverance, they cannot too speedily quit the precincts of desolation.”

“No alternative remains but emigration!” exclaimed Camille, tossing his hands in despair. “Even those who would willingly cling to the sinking vessel, are driven from the deck by the violence of its inebriated mariners.—All is lost for France!”

“Not so,” interrupted the curé, mildly. “Amid the

storm raging round us, let us anticipate the rainbow of returning sunshine. — God will not abandon his people! He permits our afflictions for a time, but closes not his heart against the cry of Israel in her bondage.”

“Another doubt perplexes my mind,” said Camille. “In my hurried interview with you last night, while irritated and perplexed by the importunate folly of that blockhead Delplanque, I could not unfold half the family afflictions our noble friend has undergone, — half the cruel effect they have wrought upon her gentle feelings.”

“Nay, Monsieur Valazy, the loss of a husband — a father ——”

“I had wished,” continued Camille, “that no mortal eye should witness the mental alienation of the unfortunate daughter of the Duc de Navelles, saving the one which watched over her childhood. But the holy exhortations of your lips may reach those wandering senses which are sealed against our voices. From the healing words of a minister of her faith, I expect more benefit than from the art of the physician.”

“Will you then permit me,” said Blaisel, “to accompany you back to Manoir? — To comfort the afflicted is as precious a duty of our vocation, as to guide the erring to repentance! It was not always,” he continued, reaching down his hat and glancing at his secular attire, “that I mingled with the children intrusted to my care, in a guise so little distinguishing as a teacher of the word of God. But I trust, Monsieur Valazy, that my lessons are not the less fervently imparted, nor my care the less actively bestowed, now that neither stole nor cassock dignify their authority.”

As they approached the farm through pastures white with the flocks which formed the pride of the simple Madelon, Monsieur Blaisel vainly attempted to divert the attention of Valazy from his distresses, by pointing out to his notice the improvements arising from his mother's vigilance and good order; and commenting, with unaffected and manly piety, upon the rich fertility of the land, and its testimony to the bounty and tenderness of Providence. But Camille had no ears for his homily; he

perceived at a little distance Tonton loosing into the paddock the blind pony on which he performed his daily pilgrimage to the post-office at Samer; and on hastening towards that very deliberate piece of human machinery, learned, in the first place, that "*Sandis ! y'faisoit diablement chiaud sur le grand camin !*"—and, secondly, that no letter was to be heard of !

Camille was in despair ; and still more so when, on the following day, and the next and the next, the same answer was renewed till he grew apprehensive of exciting by his solicitude the suspicions of the post-master. Again he despatched a letter of inquiry and remonstrance to Bauveau, addressing it to the care of his notary ; and nothing but reluctance to leave the inhabitants of Manoir to the defence of a feeble priest and a handful of servants, prevented him from returning in person to Paris, to ascertain the destiny of the little girl, and the position of Mademoiselle Delplanque.

Meanwhile, the curé had been introduced into the presence of the unfortunate sufferer. But his patient attempts to engage her attention were wholly fruitless. As the distinguished appearance of the marchioness and Mademoiselle de Mirepoix could not fail of exciting suspicion in case of a domiciliary visit on the part of the authorities of Samer, it was deemed advisable for them to assume the peasant costume, and the character of relatives of Madelon, arrived from her native province to assist in the labours of her household ; and a dress was accordingly prepared for each by the diligence of Léonie, after the model of the garments worn by Tonton's helpmate. She anticipated that her cousin might possibly be roused to notice this change of vesture, and resent the removal of her widow's weeds ; but, alas ! Emiline suffered herself to be arrayed in this unwonted and unnatural guise, without observation or resistance !

From motives of respect, as well as from the repugnance of affection, Camille forbore to enter the presence of the sufferer ; but having one day, on approaching the little tower inhabited by the marchioness, descried the gaunt figure of Tonton returning from his usual embassy to

Samer, and elevated his voice to inquire for letters, the window of Emiline's apartment was instantly thrown open by Madame Valazy, who made eager signs that he should join her without delay. — By some strange association, the sound of Camille's voice, which she heard for the first time since her indisposition, had penetrated to the heart and soul of the invalid !

"That is my good brother Camille's voice !" she suddenly exclaimed. "I sent for him so long — so very long ago, and he has come at last to save me ! — *Ah ! ma bonne maman !*" she continued, turning towards Madelon with a look of recognition, and throwing her arms round her neck. — "I have been so miserable since we parted. Had you been with me, dearest friend, I should not have suffered so severely ! — But where is Camille ?"

It was on this sudden change, that Madame Valazy summoned her son and Mademoiselle de Mirepoix ; and had the satisfaction of perceiving that their appearance produced no relapse of symptoms on the part of her patient.

"Léonie, my dear cousin !" she exclaimed, as she entered the room, "why did you suffer them to remove me to this strange place, away from my father ? — Here we are again at Navelles, — a place I had so solemnly promised myself never to revisit ; while my poor father is left alone at Florinethun among those fierce democrats."

"Pardon me !" replied Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, with great presence of mind. "Every thing at Florinethun is now as tranquil as you see it here ; and my uncle is not alone, — little Emiline is bearing him company."

"And why am I sent hither with only this darling child ?" — she resumed, snatching Aglaé with eagerness from Madelon's knee, and covering her little cheeks with kisses.

"You have both been indisposed, dear cousin !" answered Léonie, with tremulous lips ; "and are residing here to avoid the danger of infection to the family."

"Ah ! very true — I had forgotten that !" said Emiline, resuming her air of childish imbecility in so frightful a manner, that Madelon apprehended a renewed paroxysm.

But from that first interval of reason, Emiline relapsed

not into her former unconsciousness.—She wandered at times, and never sufficiently recovered herself to doubt the veracity of the statements she received; nor could any thing be more afflicting than the air of feeble credulity with which she daily demanded of Valazy — “I am better to-day, Camille — am I not? Shall I soon be sufficiently recovered to go back to Florinethum?” — Her restoration was, in fact, as gradual as her seizure had been abrupt. Every day her anxious attendants perceived some trifling amendment — some more distinct arrangement of ideas; and so satisfied was Léonie that perfect comprehension of the past, and the present, would renew her agonising terrors for the future, that Camille was the only person who murmured touching the retardment of her recovery.

It was at this period, that the paternal zeal and kindness of the worthy curé became effective. The rebellious mood of his parishioners fortunately left at his disposal a larger portion of leisure than since his settlement at Isques; which was all passed in companionship with the invalid at Manoir, in attempting by his instructions both read and spoken, to bring her into a frame of mind to endure the mighty trials she had still to undergo.

By degrees, a considerable portion of the dreadful truth was partly related and partly recalled by a spontaneous effort to her mind; and Valazy, who watched her with the dotting solicitude that directs the eyes of a parent to a favourite child, had the satisfaction of perceiving that Heaven tempered the wind to the shorn lamb, — that the tears which flowed silently and soothingly, from the eyes of Madame de St. Florentin as she leaned on his arm, when every evening at dusk she was persuaded to drag her feeble limbs along the avenue of Manoir, were as balm to the wounds of her filial tenderness.

She was, however, still persuaded of the safety and health of her little girl, whom Camille assured her to be resident at Paris under the care of Mademoiselle Delplanque, in his own household, and projected to return to the capital the moment the restoration of her bodily strength would sanction the attempt.

CHAPTER III.

DIE? — So would sullen children! —
Women that want their wills — slaves disobedient,
That fear the law, would die; the noblest live
And brave their fate

Bonduca.

LÉONIE DE MIREPOIX submitted to her afflictions with a degree of fortitude little to be expected from her youth and inexperience; and so long as her attentions were required by the miserable plight of her cousin, resolutely closed her eyes upon her personal sorrows. But now that the health of Emiline was partially restored, she no longer hesitated to confide to Madame Valazy and Camille her painful anxieties respecting the destiny of her brother; and implore the assistance of the latter in seeking intelligence of his welfare, and acquainting him with her own. She entertained little doubt that the chevalier and the Père Désenne, on learning the disasters at Florinethun, — where an opinion was prevalent that Madame de St. Florentin and her family had perished in the flames, — would direct their flight without delay to Condé's army; and if this were the case, there remained no possibility of present communication with their friends.

Whenever the question was agitated in the presence of Emiline, she enlarged on her interest in the fate of her cousin Réginald, with a degree of frankness which almost obliterated from Valazy's mind his former suspicions of her partiality; and referred herself so confidently to his services in favour of the chevalier, that he was more gratified than vexed by the expression of her solicitude. Having been made acquainted in a qualified manner with the massacre of the prisoners in Paris, she was fully aware of the extent of Mirepoix's obligations to her foster-brother.

"You were so kind — so prompt, Camille," said she, "in your interposition for Réginald. But when have you been otherwise than kind and prompt in your exertions for

me and mine? — St. Florentin's dying instructions,— nay, the very air I breathe, remind me of a thousand—thousand motives of gratitude. How strange, Camille! that the dearest friend and deadliest enemy I own on earth should be recorded in my prayers by the self-same name; — for, thank Heaven! I *am* still able to pray for forgiveness for my father's murderer!"

"In the exertions you are thus pleased to over-rate, madam," replied Valazy, "I do but fulfil a sacred duty, — though one which is powerfully advocated by my own feelings."

"No, dear Camille,—this generous profession does not deceive me. You renounced a highly advantageous position at Lyons to forward the cause of liberty, and assist in the regeneration of the constitution; and however I may condemn the nature of your political creed, be assured I am fully conscious of the extent of the sacrifice you have made in favour of my family."

"*Of yourself*—yourself only!" replied Valazy, with inadvertent emphasis. "You, who are united to my heart by the closest and holiest ties,—you, madam, have blinded me to the position of my country—to the demands of my interests. Throughout the stormy period of the Revolution, I have fixed my eye on one frail vessel buffeted by its commotions; still repeating to myself, Let me but prove the pilot to guide it into a haven of peace,—let me but see *her* safe,—prosperous,—happy ——"

"Ah! Camille," interrupted the marchioness, clasping her hands, "happiness is a thing beyond *my* reach,—beyond even the granting of *your* zealous attachment. More easy for France to renew the ancient institutions she has demolished, and close up the grievous wounds she has inflicted, than for Emiline de St. Florentin to experience one hour of unmingled joy!"

"Our lives, which are the gift of God," said Madelon, who was present at this conversation, "are never beyond reach of his blessings! His mercy has decreed that our heaviness shall not alway prevail,—that joy shall come with the morning.—Time imparts comfort to the severest afflictions."

These arguments, frequently renewed among the little party so strangely gathered into a family group at Manoir, as the creatures of the earth crowd together for mutual support in the darkness of a storm, gradually produced a degree of intimacy, an interchange of opinions and feelings between Valazy and Emiline, such as ages passed in their original circumstances could never have effected. He was careful to shun all intrusion on the presence of his mother's gentle guests, at hours rendering his society a constraint; but the company of a faithful friend, an enlightened scholar, and discriminating counsellor, was accounted by them a valuable and gratifying resource. Léonie, who was acquainted with Valazy only in the light of a gentleman of prepossessing person and address, spoke of him and to him with consideration and regard. Even Emiline, who, as a daughter of the Duc de Navelles, had in former days dwelt so strongly on the meanness of his origin, unconsciously acquired towards him the air of estimation she beheld him receive from others. He had ceased to be the Camille of Grand Moulin in her recollection. He was now only the dearest of her friends,—the defender of her husband,—the preserver of her children; and if sometimes prompted to wonder at her cousin's comments on his personal attractions, it was only that she beheld him in a light still more sacred and reverential.

With the encouragement conveyed by this alteration of manner and the unlimited advantages of their relative position, it was not wonderful that Valazy should suffer his former feelings to renew their fatal potency. Reckless of coming dangers or political terrors, he gave himself up to the joy of the hour. Day after day he allowed himself to sit listening to her voice, and gazing upon her beauty; and, without further project or expectation, luxuriate in that self-abandonment of passion which acknowledges only the existence of one engrossing object. He had obtained Madame de St. Florentin's assent to his project of emigration; and it was settled among them that immediately on the arrival of little Emiline from Paris with Bauveau and his wife, the whole party should embark for

England, till the amended destinies of their native country afforded a renewal of national tranquillity.

Yet, in spite of himself, Camille could not repress a thousand vague presentiments of further evil. Often, in the midst of his happiest and most familiar acceptance in the society of the two cousins, when he had succeeded for a time in withdrawing their attention from their unfortunate situation, he would fly from their presence, mount his horse, and seek the wild solitudes of the sand-hills and the sea-shore ; or plunge himself into the depths of the forest of Hardelet, with its melancholy waste of sere and yellow leaves ; writhing beneath a sense of his present infatuation and future disappointments.

“ When all these commotions shall have ended,” said he, as he wandered listlessly among the wild tracts of the woods, “ when the tranquil routine of social order shall be re-established in France, Emiline will learn to regard me as the abject thing I am ; and I shall have preserved her but to become the prize of one more richly gifted with the adventitious distinctions of society. The very familiarity which appears to my deluded heart a precious and endearing token, is but the involuntary evidence of Emiline’s sense of superiority ! — So conscious is her heart of the disparity between us, that she sees no danger in admitting me to the intimacy of friendship.”

Meanwhile, in spite of the tranquillity of the happy valley, the progress of affairs in the capital was any thing but uneventful. Successful in every foreign struggle, the army of the north under Kellerman had driven back the Prussians from their rash conquests in Lorraine ; while in the south, Chamberry was occupied by Montesquieu, under whose banners the unknown hero of the age was perfecting his military education, while Custine pursued his eastward course of successes in Alsace.

In the metropolis itself, measures still more vital to the interests of the nation were accelerating the progress of the new order of things. The Legislative Assembly had been dissolved, to give place to the Convention ; the first decree of the new Assembly had effected the radical suppression of royalty ; and at the instigation of Collot

d'Herbois, a strolling player — and of the constitutional Bishop Grégoire, a village-curate — *France became a republic !*

Death was decreed to all emigrants convicted of having borne arms ; the ordinary titles of the nobility were exchanged for those of citizen and citizenne ; a sentence of proscription was recorded against the royalists ; — and a public trial decreed by the Convention on the persons of its dethroned sovereigns. — The military successes arising under the new administration served to dazzle the eyes of the people, and disguise its feebleness and incapacity ; and while the ferocity of the populace became privileged by the tone of its rulers, the aristocracy of France was daily humiliated by the sacrifice of fresh victims.

But as if the sanguinary resolutions of the conventional assembly were insufficient to satisfy the thirst of the multitude, a secondary convention pursued its deliberations in the ancient convent of the Jacobins ; boasting among its members all the desperate and infamous characters of the metropolis, as well as all the master spirits of the democratic party, skilled to turn to account these instruments of mischief. Many of the leading deputies of the Assembly did not hesitate to lend their pernicious eloquence to its debates, which were prolonged far into the depth of the night, in a gloomy hall of the ancient monastery, lighted by a few scattered lamps, and crowded to suffocation with the lowest class of revolutionary ruffians. — Projects and measures too horrible to proceed from the better order of patriots, were placed in the mouths of the more brutalised of the throng ; scarcely conscious of the meaning of the atrocities they were taught to utter. The sittings of the conclave were opened by the vociferation of hymns of barbarous triumph ; alternately gloomy as the menaces they illustrated, and hideous from the contrast of their unnatural gaiety. The correspondence of the fraternal societies of the provinces was next read for the advantage of the Parisian members, amounting to about fifteen hundred. Every evil passion and savage instinct, was triumphantly exhibited by men, who affected to advance the cause of virtue and of liberty by indulgence in vices

and crimes prohibited by religious creeds of whatever denomination, and by the laws and customs of civilised countries.

One day when Camille was engaged in reciting to Emiline and her companion the victorious progress of the republican troops in Piedmont, and attempting to interest their attention by his lively sketch of the military enthusiasm of his young friend of the artillery service — Napoleon Buonaparte, — Tonton suddenly intruded his uncouth structure into the apartment to announce that a gentleman, — *a stranger*, — was anxious to speak to le Capitaine.

Both ladies started from their seats in terror; but Valazy, assuring them that the mysterious stranger was only a municipal officer levying some circular tax, accompanied Tonton to the hall; where he was greeted by the eager salutations of his servant Bauveau.

"For the love of Heaven!" cried Valazy as he closed the door, "why have you prolonged our anxieties by neglecting to forward intelligence?"

Bauveau mournfully waved his head.

"You hesitate! — The child! — reply, I conjure you, Bauveau, — is the little girl in safety?"

"Alas! monsieur le capitaine — I have reason to hope that she is in good hands — but —"

"You could not have exerted yourself," cried Valazy in despair — "you —"

"Suffer me to explain the progress of my misfortunes," said the man, with an air of so much distress, that his master became doubly alarmed.

"I had the satisfaction, sir, of seeing the nurse and child at Florinethun, and installing them as you proposed under the care of my wife. The young lady you left with us appeared to comfort herself with the innocent playfulness of the little companion I had brought her. For three days, sir, all remained quiet and well, and Mademoiselle Delplanque was gradually recovering her strength and courage, when we were disturbed by the arrival of an old gentleman, her father; who conducted himself in the most outrageous manner, indulging in invectives and accusations

against his daughter, which my respect for you, sir, forbids me to repeat.

"I was persuaded that miserable old blockhead would be the origin of mischief," cried Camille, impatiently. "Go on—go on."

"He insisted that his daughter should quit your house without a moment's delay ; and I heartily wish that the common courtesies of life had not induced me to request he would defer removing Ma'amselle Euphrosine till morning. His indiscreet manner of seeking out your abode had excited suspicion ; and before daylight, sir, the house was invested for a domiciliary visit. But though nothing suspicious was detected, Delplanque and his daughter were arrested as disguised aristocrats."

"I have no doubt he was consoled for his misfortune by falling under such a suspicion," said Camille, peevishly.

"One of the officers persisted in recognising mademoiselle and the little girl, as the Marchioness and Ma'amselle de St. Florentin ; and the child, when interrogated, naturally confirmed the suspicion by a frank acknowledgment of her name."

"But surely the ruffians did not drag to prison an innocent of Mademoiselle St. Florentin's age?"

"She was removed with Delplanque's daughter to the house of detention at the Carmelites ; while the old man and myself were conducted together to the Salpêtrière."

"Alas ! my poor Bauveau—you have then been the inmate of a prison, while I ventured to accuse you of negligence in my service?"

"For nearly three weeks, I suffered the galling irritations of my position, and the dread of your anxiety at my silence. At the end of that period, I was discharged without further comment ;—and had the mortification of ascertaining that on the same day, both Delplanque and the prisoners of the Carmelites were removed to some other prison,—which, alas ! my utmost efforts have failed in discovering."

"Great God ! they have perhaps been already sacrificed!"

"The records of the Hôtel de la Justice contain no

such registry. I even hope they have been removed to the provincial commune of Delplanque. Anxious for your further instructions, I have placed my wife in safety with her family,—and ——”

He was interrupted by the voice of Madame de St. Florentin, at the door of the chamber, claiming admittance. Having ascertained the stranger to be the Parisian domestic of Camille, she flew to question him relative to her child.

“Confirm every word you hear me utter,” whispered Valazy to Bauveau as he hastened to open the door;—and when Emiline, supported on the arm of her cousin, staggered towards him, he assured her that Bauveau had left her child well and in good hands at Paris; but that the nurse having quitted her charge, he did not venture on so long a journey without female attendance. This statement was eagerly seconded by Bauveau. But the air of trepidation visible upon the countenances of both could not escape the scrutiny of a mother!

“You are deceiving me,—I am persuaded you are deceiving me!” she exclaimed, sinking into a chair. “For some days past, my suspicions have been awakened,” faltered the marchioness. “Camille, who understands so well the claims of affection,—Camille, who *knows* the duties of a parent,—and who, in his own person, would shrink from the perilous execution of *none*,—has attempted to dissuade me from returning to Paris and re-possessioning myself of my helpless child!—Had any hope remained for me, would he have acted thus?—No—no!—I see how it is—another of the blessings of my existence has been wrested from me,—I have lost my precious Emiline!”

“Not so, madam la marquise,” interrupted Bauveau respectfully,—“Mademoiselle de St. Florentin is safe—is——”

“Camille!” cried Emiline, suddenly rising from her seat and with clasped hands advancing towards the distressed Valazy,—“you have never deceived me.—You have been a true and steadfast friend.—Do not, do not trifle with me now!”

“Compose yourself, my beloved cousin!” murmured

Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, dreading the effects of these renewed agitations upon the feeble frame of her unfortunate relative.

“Camille! you do not answer me!” persisted Emiline, approaching her foster-brother and seizing his unresisting hands within her own.—“Dearest Camille!—the truth—the *whole* truth!—*Is* my child yet spared to me?”

“On my life—on my honour—I have no intelligence, madam, to the contrary.”

“Alas, alas! he prevaricates!” exclaimed the distracted mother.—“He does not dare explain himself more fully. One word more,—and as you value my existence, my reason—be explicit.—Is my poor precious babe still resident at Paris beneath your roof?”

She fixed her eyes with so penetrating an expression of anguish on those of Valazy as she spoke, that involuntarily he evaded their mute inquiry and hesitated to reply. But all answer had been superfluous. The marchioness had fallen to the floor in a state of insensibility.

CHAPTER IV.

I loved her not as queen!—my tenderness,
Unlike the hireling ranks pranked out to grace
Her regal state upon high festivals,
Was as the flower which crushed beneath the tread
Of her habitual footsteps, gladly breathed
Its sweetest breath in dying for her sake.

WIESFL'S *Octavia*.

It is astonishing with what facility the most timid persons become familiarised with the aspect of danger and death, during a period of revolution. It was scarcely a matter of surprise to Euphrosine Delplanque to find herself a second time in the hands of the minions of the new government. Having long abandoned all hope of affording effectual service to the royal victims, against whose lives all France—all Europe—seemed leagued in a common bond of cruelty or indifference, her own seemed to lose all esti-

mation in her eyes. The cause for which she had lived, and moved, and had her being, was trampled in the dust ; and Euphroisine, on recovering her senses under the tender cares of Madame Bauveau, deviated not a moment from the expression of her regret that Valazy had not suffered her to perish among the victims to the royal cause, in the undistinguishing butchery of the prisoners of Paris. She foresaw herself reserved for a similar destiny. There was nothing on the earth to move her regrets ; and willingly would she have laid down her head upon a decent pillow, to die in peace, — with a parting prayer of gratitude for Camille — of intercession for the persecuted family of her sovereign !

She was not, however, prepared with fortitude to find her poor old father involved in her ruin ; nor to bear up against the maledictions which, in the mortification and terror of his arrest, he pronounced against herself. She was not nerved with courage to hear, without tears, the cries of the little Emiline de St. Florentin after her mother and sister, — nor to see the innocent child condemned to the rigours and confinement of a prison.

In the bitterness of these aggravations to her former misery, she had been detained a fortnight at the Carmelites, when one morning she heard herself summoned by the turnkey to be transferred to the Conciergerie ; and recollecting the dreadful events connected with her last removal in La Force, instantly disentangled the arms of little Emiline from her neck, and addressing herself with hurried but earnest eloquence to a lady, — a young and beautiful stranger, whom she had repeatedly noticed for the grace and tenderness of her demeanour towards an aged friend, whom she comforted by daily visits during her captivity, — implored her to take charge of the helpless child, and preserve her from immediate death. “ If you are a mother,” cried Euphroisine, in incoherent accents, “ you will not withhold your mercy from the orphan of one of the noblest houses in France.”

“ Fear not, replied the stranger, receiving the little girl into her arms, as the turnkeys rudely pushed forward to expedite the slackened progress of Mademoiselle Delplanque

through the prison-court. "I *am* a mother—I have a mother's heart—your little nursling shall share its protection."

Finding that she was by no means more painfully situated at the Conciergerie than in her former durance, Euphrosine was soon tempted to lament the precipitation with which she had delivered the daughter of Madame de St. Florentin into unknown guardianship. But the act was irrecallable; and her warm recollection of the mild and endearing expression of the lady's countenance, and of the tears which hung upon the silken lashes of her deep blue eyes in accepting the pledge, almost satisfied the scruples of the prisoner.

Euphrosine had, in truth, other sorrows to disturb the weariness of captivity. She knew not whether the old man her father were yet alive; and though she passed the greater portion of her time in framing letters of inquiry addressed to his friends in Paris, had every reason to suspect that they served no better purpose than to light the pipe of her gaoler. The inmates of the ward in which she was confined, which was one marked for peculiar severity, consisted of four women of the highest rank, of advanced age; but not sufficiently softened by prison discipline to renounce the haughty pretensions of their aristocratic estate. When they discovered their youthful companion to be a tradesman's daughter, each was anxious to purchase her services as *femme de chambre*; and on her mild excuses, began to treat her with the *hauteur* due to a retired *bourgeoise du Marais*, and the disgust they considered due to their discovery of her temporary assumption of male attire and military duties.

But notwithstanding the degraded and monotonous isolation of her existence, Euphrosine was never tempted to wish she had met with other companions; for the occasional visits paid to the fierce Duchesse d'Ann'cy and the two countesses her sisters, afforded her those tidings of the condition of the unhappy prisoners in the Temple, which she might not have gathered from meaner associates. She even ascertained incidentally from their discourse that Madame de St. Florentin, her children, and

Léonie de Mirepoix were believed to have perished in the flames of the Château de Florinethun ; and as the decree of death passed by the Convention on all emigrants returning to France rendered the re-appearance of the marchioness impossible, Euphrosine ceased to regret the measures she had taken for the safety of Emiline. Little did she imagine that the party which so often occupied her solitudes had never quitted their native soil ;—little did she conjecture what days, what weeks, what months of pain and solicitude were passed by the inmates of Manoir, while Valazy vainly attempted to recover traces of herself and the child.

Meanwhile, the course of public events was marked in characters of blood !—At every sitting, the Convention became more deeply involved in a system of terrorism and severity.—The trial of the king—his condemnation—*his execution* ;—the murder of Marie Antoinette, of the innocent Madame Elizabeth—followed like gradations of crime. Already the name of Robespierre was rising into horrible pre-eminence ;—while Marat, his rival in sin, had encountered the retributive hand of a female assassin. Yet these catastrophes, so memorable to the pen of history,—so mighty in their causes and effects throughout their scattered progress,—produced no change in the destiny of the obscure prisoner of the Conciergerie, who had adventured her life and safety to retard their operation. Month after month brought tidings of some further humiliation inflicted on the queen ; and Euphrosine, blinded by the tears of her infructuous indignation, was accustomed to sit-ruminating on the afflictions of the captive of the Temple, till she became unconscious of her own.

At length that dreadful year of probation was at an end.—On the 16th of October, 1793, Marie Antoinette of France perished on the scaffold,—having atoned by the severest earthly sufferings for the venial transgressions of a life of frivolity. “The sacrifice of your head at the guillotine,” said one of her most ferocious judges, in announcing her fatal sentence to the queen, “will expiate ——”

"*Errors, but no crimes!*" interrupted the daughter of Maria Theresa ;— and thus expiring with the humility of a Christian and the dignity of a queen, the illustrious victim bequeathed to the abhorrence of all times and countries the memory of her assassins.

A few days previous to this heart-rending catastrophe, which afflicted no subject of the kingdom with more severity than the humble Euphrosine, three of the noble companions of her captivity were dragged forth to the scaffold, and replaced by persons of inferior and more companionable degree ; who, from the recency of their imprisonment, were enabled to initiate her with appalling accuracy into the present condition of the metropolis, — the overthrow of all the decencies of society, — the establishment of the most sanguinary of despotisms under the banner of Liberty and the sanction of men who felt that the first person venturing to pause in the career of the Revolution must be crushed by the mighty machine he had set in motion ! — St. Just, the mouthpiece of Robespierre, was often heard to declare, that " to dare all things was the principle of the new administration."

Nor were the atrocious distinctions achieved by Maximilien Valazy forgotten among the records afforded by the newly arrived victims of the Conciergerie. He had attained the summit of his " bad eminence ;" and his unequalled command over the passions of the Jacobin party was supposed to have attracted the envy and jealousy of the Cordelier faction. Enriched in a most suspicious degree by that sanguinary coinage facetiously said by Danton 'to issue from the mint of the guillotine, — he was distinguished by the wanton profusion of his habits of life, and the imperial magnificence displayed by the miserable girl now metamorphosed into the beatified priestess of the new creed. — The mistress of Maximilien Valazy was selected to receive the adoration of the most civilised capital of Europe, under the title of the Goddess of Reason !

But Euphrosine had no indignation to bestow on this part of the narrative. The position of Flavie suggested a hope that her interference might procure tidings of her poor old father ; nor did she hesitate to address the object

of her contempt with an earnest prayer for her interest to secure their confinement in the same prison.

A letter addressed to a person boasting the protection of one of the most influential members of the Convention, was more sacred in the eyes of the turnkey than those bearing the superscription of a paltry citizen of the Rue St. Honoré; and most unfortunately for the imprudent daughter of Delplanque, he chose to deliver it into the hands of Maximilien himself, who believed Euphrosine to have fallen during the massacres of the preceding September. Too much occupied during the intervals of his public duty with the indulgence of his libertine pursuits, to enter minutely into the details of the outrages committed under his sanction, his sole regret in the success of his projects was the escape of Camille from his revengeful designs, and the feeble execution of his will at Florinethun, by the death of the marchioness, who, with her family possessions, he had intended to make his own by marriage. He was not only ignorant of her actual escape, and the part taken by his cousin in her favour, but from that memorable day had never obtained the slightest clue to the motives of Camille's sudden departure from Paris, or the cause of his flight. He knew that two persons had been falsely arrested as the deceased Duc de Navelles and his daughter; and believed them to have been set at liberty, without troubling himself with further inquiries.

Great, therefore, was his astonishment on learning, from the startling communication of Euphrosine Delplanque, that a victim whom he had sentenced to especial execution the preceding year, should have evaded the massacre at La Force, and still survive in the dungeons of Paris! Detesting her as a person connected with his kinsman, he resolved to visit her in prison, with the hope of obtaining intelligence relative to the present retreat of Camille.

It was the second time Euphrosine Delplanque had been confronted, in all the insolence of office, by the Citoyen Valazy; — it was the second time her contemptuous glance had found occasion to note the malevolent expression and bullying air, with which the spirit of evil disfigures the noblest form. Maximilien possessed an

incomparably higher cast of personal beauty than his cousin ; yet her remembrance of the gentle grace of Camille's figure, and the romantic and somewhat mournful expression of his intelligent countenance, formed a disadvantageous contrast with the ruffianly audacity of the fierce Jacobin before her.

Seating himself in the wooden chair of her miserable cell, he motioned Euphrosine to place herself opposite ; and as he proceeded in his coarse interrogations, scanned with a deliberate sneer the ravages effected by a year's imprisonment on her beautiful person.

" You are the Citoyenne Delplanque ? "

Euphrosine bowed her assent.

" I should scarcely have thought so, upon the evidence of my recollection ! — Convicted of having afforded important assistance to the royal cause ? "

" Suspected of being suspected," replied Euphrosine, calmly.

" It is you, however, who have addressed a letter to the Citoyenne Audicourt, requiring her interest to procure an interview with your father ? "

" It is, indeed ! " cried Euphrosine, losing at once all the coldness and rigidity of her demeanour in the hope that she had misinterpreted the intentions of Valazy ; and that he had been prevailed upon by Flavie to further her restoration to her father. " You are come to announce your assent to my prayer ! " —

" Softly, softly ! " said Maximilien, putting her back with the knotted stick he habitually carried. " When do you ever hear of favours being granted without an equivalent ? "

" Alas ! what have I to offer ? " exclaimed Euphrosine, despondingly. " Twelve months have expired since my father's arrest and my own. — I know not even where they have confined him ; — and for our worldly possessions, they have fallen into the hands of the nation, or of those surviving relatives who believe us to be no more. No, citizen ! — if a bribe be necessary to secure your acquiescence in my petition, I must resign myself to my destiny. My trial will not be long ; for the change you

have noted in my wasted person is derived from that gnawing worm of sorrow, which slowly but unfailingly ——”

“Bah!” interrupted Maximilien, with a brutal laugh. “Think you I came hither to bandy *tirades* of sentiment with a puling romanticist? — I know you, citoyenne, for a silly, flighty girl, whose head has been turned by the notice of Capet’s wife. But I have no desire to favour myself with one of your declamations. — Keep them for my wishy-washy cousin, who will perhaps be willing to turn an ear to them when he shall have dried his tears for the loss of St. Florentin’s widow.”

“Is Emiline dead?” — involuntarily exclaimed Euphrosine.

“Ay! we have rid you of a troublesome rival; and sent her to join her royalist marquis from a pile as glorious as that of a Hindoo Suttce! But to the point! — You are acquainted with the secret retreat of the merchant of Lyons, who, I am assured, has not passed the frontier. Give me a clue to Camille Valazy’s abode, and within an hour, I will place you in your father’s arms.”

Euphrosine staggered back a few paces and covered her face with her hands. A snare had been woven for her, almost beyond her powers of avoidance. She thought of the poor old man whose tenderness for herself, — for his only child, — had been the means of betraying his infirm age into the hands of the enemy. — She thought of her prolonged resistance to his commands in clinging to the cause and service of the court; — and trembled under the sense of her temptation!

Her hesitation satisfied the mind of the observant deputy, that the secret was at her disposal.

“Speak but the word,” said he; “for I have confidence in your peevish veracity to know that you would not deceive me. — Say but that in such and such a place Camille Valazy lies in concealment, and I promise you your father’s liberty and your own.”

This excess of generosity startled the suspicions of Euphrosine. She was satisfied that some double meaning,

— some delusion, — lurked under such specious offers. “ Perhaps my poor father is already dead ! ” thought she ; “ but if not, Heaven forbid that I should purchase his release with treachery — with the price of blood ! — This monster, who believes the family of the Duc de Navelles to have perished in the conflagration at Florinethun, would doubtless devote them to destruction on discovering their retreat at Manoir ! — Let me not die with the weight of their betrayal on my conscience ! ”

“ I have the honour to wait your pleasure, *citoyenne* ! ” cried Maximilien with profound scorn. “ And however agreeable you may find your residence at the Conciergerie, I am by no means ambitious of prolonging mine beyond a reasonable limit. Do you accept my terms ? ”

“ I do not ! ”

“ But you acknowledge yourself to be in possession of the information I seek ? ”

“ I have made no such confession.”

“ Fool ! ” cried Maximilien, stamping impatiently on the pavement ; “ see you not that you are trifling with your own perdition ; and that, making all due allowance for feminine obstinacy and stupidity, I have no time to waste upon your heroics ? — Hark ye, girl ! — I have just compassion enough for your infatuation, to place the truth plainly before you ! — The Convention, by way of satisfying its parental misgivings touching the principles and affections of its beloved provinces, is about to extend the discipline bestowed on Lyons, Nantes, Avignon, and others of its cities, towards your tapestry-weaving *bourgade* of the north. A special commission is on the point of visiting Arras, with Lebon, — our worthy citizen, Joseph Lebon, — at its head.”

“ Lebon ! ” faltered Euphrosine with quivering lips, for the name of this emulator of Robespierre, this Seïd of the Mahomet of Paris, had penetrated even the walls of the Conciergerie.

“ Robespierre marks his attachment towards his native city by expediting, for its special reformation, the promising priestling whom we anticipate as the rival of his

reputation. And as my friend Lebon will naturally want a few subjects on whom to give a specimen of his operations, I promise you, unless you comply with my proposals, the honour of handselling his guillotine. Your father and yourself shall be despatched back to judgment in his native city, to be ready for the opening of the new tribunal."

"You dare not!" — cried Euphrosine, with kindling energy. "You dare not thus pervert to the purposes of private vengeance the laws of this misgoverned country. Vile as you are,—vile as are the suborned instruments which serve to disseminate your polluted principles, and deceive the people of France into a blind confidence in your guardianship, you dare not adjudge to death an innocent old man who in his life never breathed a political opinion. No! you *dare not!*"

With a sudden impulse of rage, Valazy seized the arm of the imprudent Euphrosine, while the Comtesse Eléonore d'Annécy, who was sitting gathered like a ball in one corner of the chamber, uttered a shriek of consternation.

"Go! worm!" — said he, recovering himself; "it were an act of mercy to trample on thee: — I reserve thee for a more exemplary destiny. Despite thy self-sufficiency, thou shalt learn that the population which gazed unmoved on the annihilation of a monarchy of eight centuries' duration, which assisted as a public festival at the execution of the *ci-devant* king — his wife — his sister — his ministers — will be little inclined to stir itself in behalf of the insolent daughter of a demented old shopkeeper of the Rue St. Honoré. Thou shalt learn thine own miserable insignificance. Thou shalt implore my aid, — and implore it in vain."

It was some minutes after Valazy had quitted the room, before Euphrosine could recover the stunning effects of his denunciation; and the first circumstance which recalled her to recollection, was the gracious courtesy with which she was greeted by her female companion. This alteration of demeanour was attributed by the Countess d'Annécy, the survivor of her original fellow-captives, to

the esteem excited by the spectacle of her undaunted courage ; but her recommendations that Euphrosine should forward terms of submission to a person gifted with the most unlimited power as well as a disposition to exert it in her favour, convinced her that the countess had interested views.

But she was soon rescued from these importunities and counsels. On the following day the Citoyenne Delplanque was required to sign her certificate of safe discharge from the Conciergerie ; and instal herself with fetters on her hands in a covered cart, filled with prisoners and officers of justice bound to Arras. In defiance of the inclement weather, they travelled leisurely and without the pause of a single hour to their destination ; with no better subject for their midnight study, than the execrations of the assassins to whose safe conduct they were committed, and the horrible pageant in which their own part was pre-appointed.

Meanwhile, during Mademoiselle Delplanque's secret and protracted imprisonment at the Conciergerie, the disconsolate inhabitants of Manoir could scarcely be said to enjoy much greater freedom of action. Beholding in the approach of every inoffensive neighbour subject of terror and anxiety, there was no hour of the day, no vicissitude of the season, which relieved them from their solitudes, or diverted their minds from their afflictions and those of their distracted country. Every research which could be prosecuted concerning the place of Euphrosine's imprisonment, without endangering the personal safety of Madame de St. Florentin by attracting notice towards the unsuspected obscurity of Manoir, was effected by the untiring exertions of her foster-brother. More than once, on the encouragement of secret information, he visited Paris in disguise ; confronting the danger of detection and the afflicting spectacle of the subversion of order and decency during the Reign of Terror. At the instigation of Léonie, he even reluctantly sought the ruins of Florinethun ; which, though claimed by the next kinsman of the St. Florentin family as the hereditary property of an unproscribed and unemigrated race, still remained in dispute and in the occupation of national officers.

But it was only to learn from the vaunts of the villagers, that it was at the instigation of a stanch friend of the nation—Valazy, one of the popular members of the Convention—they had triumphed over their former masters, destroyed the château by fire, and consumed the whole family on the burning pile!

Such were the insufficient tidings collected by Camille. On the advice of his notary, he enrolled himself in the archives of the *état civil* of the *commune* at Arras, as a member of the republic available for the duties of the National Guard; and during his sojourn in that city obtained such information from the correspondent of his man of business, —a worthy notary of advanced years, named Voisenon,—as satisfied him that the wealthy relatives of Delplanque and his daughter believed them to have perished in the indiscriminate massacre of the Parisian prisons.

He was cautious, however, to withhold this intelligence from the still sanguine Emiline; for though certain that both had survived that sanguinary epoch, the state of Madame de St. Florentin's mind was such as to render all communications of a dispiriting character highly dangerous. More than once, the alternations of hope and fear to which she was subjected touching the recovery of her little girl, produced a relapse of her former alarming attack; and during these dreadful paroxysms, Camille and his mother, with undeviating and vigilant tenderness, devoted themselves to watch over her—to wait upon her caprices—to soothe her irritations; while Léonie appropriated her cares to the half-orphaned child, and her humble prayers to Heaven for an alleviation of their common wretchedness.

Meanwhile, the conventional edict passed for a nominal census throughout the provinces, with a view to the detection of secreted royalists and unconstitutional priests, tended to aggravate their apprehensions of recognition or betrayal. Without consulting the prejudices of the marchioness, Camille caused the two noble cousins to be entered in the parochial certificate as the Citoyennes Dumanoir, kinswomen to the proprietor of the farm; but this new measure of the administration, by placing every individual of every family

under the surveillance of the authorities of the district, tended to redouble his uneasiness for his guests, and his desire that they should quit the kingdom without delay.

The year which had crept over their heads since the fatal catastrophe of Florincethun had produced a powerful effect upon the feelings of Camille. The mind of his adored Emiline, however intelligent or however fortified by principles of religion, was not of a tone to rise with circumstances. Overpowered by those calamities which the energetic firmness of Euphrosine might have enabled her to surmount, she was alternately exalted by unnatural excitement, and overwhelmed by despondency. Her heart, apparently cauterised by the domestic bereavements she had undergone, became insensible to the influence of public events; and even the recital of the destinies of the sovereigns she loved and honoured, appeared to fall unnoticed on her ear. Her personal sorrows imparted a species of bitterness to her contemplation of the political evils attributed to the misgovernment of the court of Versailles.

But though this feebleness of character had insensibly deadened the aspirations of her infatuated lover, at a period of life when the heart and its impulses acquire so undue a supremacy over all human conduct, the qualities and powers of his mind were not always to be retained in this fatal subjection. Developed by the progress of time, as well as by the ordeal of a great public crisis, the spirit of Valazy began to chafe against the boundaries within which he had too patiently limited his career. So long as the existence of Louis XVI. afforded the probability of a modified re-establishment of the French monarchy, the troubles of the kingdom might be esteemed a temporary struggle, making way for the formation of a liberal constitution. But this very constitution had assumed so independent and unprecedented a form, its measures and organisation were so notoriously perverted and retarded by the operations of the band of ruffians to which the retribution of Providence had intrusted the chastisement of the kingdom, that no lover of liberty or of his country could suffer himself to remain inactive in the cause. The sovereigns of Europe had

leagued themselves to exterminate the spurious national power which had risen up during their lethargy and existed in defiance of their threats ; and the question was no longer the modification of monarchical and aristocratical institutions, but the combination of the people of France against their foreign enemies and domestic traitors.

The heart of Valazy revolted within him as he dwelt upon these things ! — He felt that he had no right to betray his

Noon of manhood to a myrtle shade,

while the hydra, bred on the soil of his native country, was spreading a pestilence over her devastated plains. Yet how to tear himself away from the guardianship of the precious deposit committed to his care ; — how relinquish the affecting ties which circumstances had rendered as sacred as they were dear ? — His domestication under the same roof with the object of his earliest attachment, instead of diminishing the charm by which he had been so long infatuated, served rather to magnify its influence. The beauty of Emiline, — her grace of demeanour, — and that perfect and pure refinement of thought, word, and action, which no casual humiliation can degrade, — not only fascinated his eyes and formed an embellishment to his daily existence, but her helplessness, — her feebleness, — her reliance on himself, — her tenderness to his mother, — her *womanliness*, in short, in every sentiment and every frailty, — trebled the bond of his devotion to her cause ! — He loathed himself whenever he reflected upon the inertness which had retarded the progress of his public career ; but he loathed himself still more when, on rumour of some new commotion, he was tempted to a momentary design of quitting Manoir, — of devoting his sword to the call of his country, — and bequeathing the strangers within his gates to the protection of a merciful Providence !

Profiting by the improvement which became visible in the health of the marchioness on the return of spring, Valazy proceeded to lay before her with the utmost delicacy, but with firmness and energy, the degrading and

painful situation in which he was placed by her refusal to quit the country.

"So long as it is your will to remain my mother's inmate," said he, "so long will her son devote himself to your protection. While Maximilien Valazy exists, the daughter of Navelles possesses too deadly an enemy to be intrusted to any common mode of defence. But could you be persuaded, madam, to seek refuge for a time in England, would you but permit me to escort you thither and witness your establishment, I might return to my country, — to my duty, — without the paralysing thought of Emiline's danger to unnerve my soul."

"Be merciful, dearest cousin," cried Léonie, entwining her arms round her waist. "By cherishing an expectation rejected by your better reason, you endanger yourself, — your little Aglaë, your faithful Madelon, — and embitter the existence of our friend."

"Why cannot Camille depart upon the duty which he considers so imperious — and ——"

"*Why?* — Be not ungenerous! — Has he not for eighteen miserable months devoted his existence to our aid and consolation? — and can you suppose the conduct of your foster-brother actuated by any ordinary measure of attachment?"

"I do *not*! — But he would mark it in a manner more satisfactory to my feelings by suffering me to remain here under the care of my dear, good Madelon, than by forcing me into desolate and unprotected banishment."

"If my service be conducive to your happiness, my child," said Madame Valazy to her refractory nursling, "fear not but that I will gladly accompany you into exile."

"And on receiving intelligence that our lives have been so miraculously preserved, my brother will hasten to meet us in England," persisted Léonie.

"Do not reject our petition," resumed Valazy, throwing himself at her feet. "These provinces will soon be a still more dangerous residence than even the capital of France; and the sacrifice I am making of my honour,

great as it is, may not suffice to preserve you from the detection of my vile kinsman, or the persecutions of Lebon's commission."

It was not possible for the obstinacy of Madame de St. Florentin to resist these arguments. She consented that Valazy should visit Arras to effect such an arrangement of his pecuniary affairs as would enable him to conduct them to England, and return without delay to engage as a volunteer in the republican army.

His departure, however, was not contemplated without anxiety by Mademoiselle de Mirepoix or her cousin. They were now so accustomed to feel themselves secured by his guardianship and solaced by his society, that a day passed without Camille, became a season of dread and desolation; and when the second night arrived appointed for his return to Manoir, and he failed to make his appearance, a thousand apprehensions took possession of their minds. Bitterly did Emiline revile herself for having sanctioned his departure.

"Why did we suffer him to leave us? — Madelon — Léonie — wherefore did you persuade me to concur in his mad project?" cried she. "In Camille's absence, I become conscious of my helplessness, of my afflictions; — for while *he* is with us, his tenderness obliterates all remembrance of the past. — Why did we suffer him to quit Manoir!"

While they were anxiously looking for the arrival of the truant, a national soldier attached to the mairie of Samer made his appearance at the farm; bearing a letter superscribed *not* to the Citoyenne Dumanoir — but to the *ci-devant* Marchioness of St. Florentin; — a letter signed with the name, *not* of Camille, — but of MAXIMILIEN VALAZY! — The fugitives were betrayed!

CHAPTER V.

Smear your hands
 In guiltless blood — laugh at my martyrdom !
 But yet remember, when posterity
 Shall read your volumes, filled with wondrous acts,
 And shall arrive at this black bloody page,
 Noting your foolish barbarisms, and my wrong
 (As time shall make it plain), what follows this,
 Deciphering any noble deed of yours,
 Shall be quite lost — mankind will read no more.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER

ON his arrival at the *chef lieu*, — whither he had resorted on more than one occasion during the early part of his residence at Manoir, in the hope of gaining tidings of Euphrosine, — Camille was startled by an unusual appearance of activity and animation in the streets. Arras, in its ordinary character, presents so monotonous and desolate an appearance, that he was at a loss to what popular festivity or unwonted celebration to attribute the change. But on presenting himself at the house of a respectable notary of the town, whom he had repeatedly visited upon business in company with the Curé Blaisel, he learnt that the revolutionary tribunal had opened its sittings during the preceding week ; that Lebon, the president of the commission, had received powers and instructions from the Convention of a strangely ferocious description ; that the proceedings which had taken place were calculated to foreshow the most tyrannous and sanguinary administration ; and worse than all, that under sanction of such authority, a spirit of jacobinical violence had manifested itself among the populace, highly alarming to the moderate party and all persons of respectable degree throughout the city.

“ I am now about to proceed to the tribunal,” said monsieur — or, as he was now called, the Citoyen Voisc-

non, "which must be my excuse for not accompanying you to the head quarters of the Garde Nationale, as you desire. But in truth, I have a most disagreeable — a most painful business on hand."

"Connected with this revolutionary commission?"

"Connected with a young person issued from the family of a respectable burgess of this town. Arrested in Paris on suspicion of having been concerned, through the most improbable and romantic connection, in the adventures of the royal family and the projects of the Tuileries, — she has been sent hither to afford an example to the aristocratic and moderate party of Arras; and much against my will, I am retained by the family of this poor girl to undertake her defence, and that of her old father. I have little hope for either party; but unless old Delplanque's personal folly ——"

"Delplanque! — not the former silk-mercator of the Rue St. Honoré?" cried Camille.

"The very same. Surely you formerly interrogated me touching this family, at a time when their wealthy relatives in Arras believed both father and daughter to have perished in the massacre of the 2d of September?"

"True, true! But I delay you, — your presence is required at the tribunal. Suffer me, Monsieur Voisenon, to accompany you. I am more interested — far, far more — in this miserable affair, than in that which brought me hither. — Euphrosine! — poor unhappy girl!"

"Nay, then — I shall certainly *not* suffer you to bear me company. At your age, monsieur le capitaine, it is a difficult task to place a vizard on the countenance, and a padlock on the tongue, while the life and death of those we love are trafficking before our eyes. I must not suffer you to get into trouble by an intemperate testimony of sympathy in the fate of my clients. No, no! my young friend! — it is bad enough for an old practitioner like myself to witness the condemnation of youth, beauty, and innocence. — I will not have the outbreak of *your* indignation to answer for."

"Nevertheless you must not prevent me from posting

myself in some inostensible situation, which will enable me to follow the examination of the prisoners. My self-command will better enable me to endure the visible progress of their destiny, than the anxiety of wandering about the streets of Arras during the procedure."

"Remain here in my study till my return!" still persisted Voisenon, solicitous for the safety of a young man whom he highly esteemed.

"No!" replied Camille, with an air of calm determination, drawing nearer to the lawyer, who was now equipping himself for departure. "You have nothing to fear from my indiscretion. The times we live in subvert our very natures; and I, who have served so long an apprenticeship to simulation,—I, who every day and every hour, am compelled to place the most revolting constraint upon my feelings,—may be surely trusted in a case where the eyes of thousands will be upon me."

Voisenon, perceiving all further remonstrance to be fruitless, departed in company with his young friend; and on approaching the fatal hall, pointed out to him the door open to the ingress of such citizens as chose to profit by the edifying lessons imparted for their instruction. From the struggle which Valazy encountered in making good his entrance, it appeared that the inhabitants of Arras were still unsatiated with the terrible pageant prepared for them by the providence of their infamous townsman, Maximilian Robespierre; but on paying a small gratuity to one of the national ushers, Camille was accommodated with a seat in a small gallery, the front benches of which were occupied by respectable burgesses and well-dressed females.

The area below was filled with a tumultuous mob of sans-culottes of the lowest description; and as in most instances of popular assemblage during the demoralising period of the Revolution,—chiefly females. It is true, that on occasion of some of its earlier scenes of riot and bloodshed, such as the attack on Versailles, the entry of the populace into the Tuileries, and the massacre of the prisons, the costume of *poissardes* and market women was assumed by many well-known leaders of the Jacobin

party, who did not think proper to render themselves responsible by open participation in these acts of violence. But it is also certain, that many of the most savage outrages of the Revolution were committed under the eyes, and even at the instigation, of females !' During the trial of Louis XVI., one end of the Hall of Assembly was converted into a place of fashionable resort. Women, elegantly dressed and characterised by grace and loveliness which might have adorned the most humane and feminine of their sex, were seated day after day in the different boxes ; eating ices and oranges, smiling and coquetting, and inciting the ferocious resolutions of such among the deputies as divided their attention between the duties of their post and of their gallantry.

In justice to the female character of the Parisians, it must be admitted, that such personages as Flavie Audicourt and La Desmahis already assumed the importance assigned by ill-gotten wealth and the supremacy of crime during the reign of terror to the most degraded individuals ; —and that the female frequenters of the clubs of Paris were of the same wretched class who adorned themselves with flaxen tresses, purchased of the executioner Samson as those of the Princess de Lamballe, and instituted balls à-la-victime, held in desecrated churches, where the light feet of the dancers bounded over sepulchral stones !—Such were the women who presided over the trial of the unfortunate king ; and who, as every member made his appearance singly in the tribunal to offer his vote, saluted with intemperate applauses the memorable affirmative of “ LA MORT ! ” —and assailed with hootings and insult the merciful minority, which demanded deposition, imprisonment, or an appeal to the people. A scene of judgment such as might be supposed to proceed in reverent and breathless tranquillity, assumed the tone of a brawling and disreputable election riot !

The spectators, male and female, assembled in the tribunal-hall at Arras, though of a somewhat different order from the factious idlers of Paris, were by no means secondary

in ferocity of purpose. Prepared by the exordium of the new commissioner to witness a liberal outpouring of blood, and accustomed to the spectacle of such an effusion, they considered themselves ill used if defrauded of this habitual recreation. The sanguinary Lebon, whose age, aspect, and profession accorded strangely with the monstrous atrocities of his official proceedings, had been careful to select for the revolutionary committee delegated under his authority, men branded with infamy in their previous courses of life, and capable of all excesses in the execution of their revolutionary duties. Yet in more than one instance, when even these notorious ruffians hesitated in the condemnation of an innocent person, the wretched prisoner was brought back from his dungeon to the bar of the tribunal, while the president in a violent harangue to the court, announced that the first member convicted of *modérantisme* should be instantly dragged to the guillotine. And thus, mercy became a forgotten word under his jurisdiction; and Camille Valazy, when on entering the gallery he cast a shuddering glance on the four prisoners standing within the bar, perceived at once in their countenances the impassive expression of utter despair!

The individual on trial was a rich merchant of Cambray; whose prosperity and opulence had drawn upon him the enmity of the Jacobin party of his native city. He was accused—like the respectable and unfortunate citizens who illustrated the despotism exercised at Bourdeaux by Tallien and Isabeau—of belonging to the *mercantile aristocracy*,—a crime newly invented by the Convention;—of having amassed his riches by monopoly, and an usurious use of his capital;—and, finally, of having openly inveighed against the law of maximum. It was in vain that the agitated and bewildered prisoner implored his judges to discriminate between pernicious monopoly and the right of warehousing (*emmagasinement*), so essential to the course of commerce. He was cut short in his defence as prolix and importunate, and condemned almost unheard.

On being dragged from the hall, his place at the bar was occupied by a young woman holding an infant in her arms,

apparently a simple peasant of the province of Artois. As she held up her head to cast a glance of appeal towards the committee, the sinister countenances which met her view penetrated the trembling mother with such a thrill of despair, that with an involuntary movement she folded her child more closely to her bosom ; holding it there for a moment, as if to guard its innocent life and her own by that mighty and protecting union of natural affections.

To the accusation recorded against her, (of having aided a correspondence between her former *seigneur*, a cidevant noble under sentence of death, and his wife and daughter,) the poor woman pleaded guilty ; on the instigation of her counsel, that to throw herself on the mercy of the court might possibly procure a remission of her sentence. But Lebon was not prepared to see a single victim escape from the army of martyrs, with whose names he promised himself to swell the list of his services to the Convention. Having applied to his tablets for the private information with which he had provided himself relative to the accused, he assumed that artificial smile characterising the plausibility of the neophytes of Robespierre, and proceeded to cross-examine the artless prisoner ; demanding of her, among other things, whether she had not adorned herself in her holyday attire on a certain Sunday, and secretly confessed herself to an unconstitutional priest, living in concealment in some village in the neighbourhood of Arras?—The woman was put on her oath, and the question reiterated by one of the committee. But she only turned pale and shuddered, without venturing to deny the truth of the charge.

“ Answer me, credulous idiot ! ” cried Lebon, with a torrent of blasphemous invectives : “ the court waits your reply.”

“ If your lordships would consider —— ”

“ Fool ! remember that you are addressing simple citizens of the French republic. — Have you or have you not assisted in the forbidden solemnities treasonably celebrated by a priest in unconstitutional orders ?

“ I have ! ” faltered the trembling creature ; and her

affirmative was instantly drowned in a vociferous sentence of — DEATH! —

“ But my child,* — my helpless child !” shrieked the terrified mother, straining her infant in her arms, as the soldiers presented themselves to drag her away. “ You will not surely murder my innocent child, — my poor, tender, friendless babe ! — My husband, — my family, — all have perished who could protect it !”

A general shudder affected the better class of the spectators, as the savage men by whom she was surrounded attempted to tear the little creature from its mother’s grasp.

“ Will no merciful woman present here receive it from me ?” cried the frantic prisoner, extending her arms towards the audience. “ Will no one purchase the fervent blessing of a dying woman ?”

A young and very beautiful girl seated near the prisoner behind the bar, rose on this appeal, and moved towards the unfortunate mother. But the scornful laugh of the Assembly recalled to her remembrance her own predicament ; and, abashed and distressed, she cowered back behind an old man who was also numbered among the prisoners waiting their turn of summons, — and who whispered loud enough to be heard by Camille, — “ For pity’s sake, Euphrosine, meddle not with what so little concerns you. — Consult your own dignity, child. — Be silent, — wait your turn ; and do not aggravate our danger by further temerity.”

“ Take the urchin from its mother,” cried Lebon, irritated by this delay, “ and toss it into the lime-pit with her dead body. — Away with them both ! — We have no leisure to institute a nursery for the bantlings of refractory royalists.”

This iniquitous sentence was instantly obeyed ; and the hideous heart-piercing scream uttered by the mother as they tore the little victim from her arms, froze the hearts of many of the audience who wanted courage to betray their indignation, and who, by this seeming concurrence, led the way to those atrocities of Lebon, which penetrated

even into their own homes ; — such as the condemnation enforced on a miserable woman of lying for hours beneath the guillotine, with the life-blood of a beloved husband dropping on her face.*

But there was one spectator of the scene, who could not so easily repress her abhorrence. For an instant, Euphrosine Delplanque was transfixed with horror by that searching cry of maternal agony ; and stood pale, and shuddering, and speechless. But the warm tide of feeling which had deserted her stricken heart, returned with tenfold impetuosity. Urged by an irresistible impulse, she rushed to the front of the bar, exclaiming in rapid but articulate accents, “ I appeal to the God of the orphan and the widow against this wanton outpouring of innocent blood ! I denounce you before his tribunal as a trespasser on his laws — ”

Her father, forcibly interrupting this frantic expostulation, clung round the resisting girl, and attempted to withdraw her from farther exposure. But on this unprecedented interruption, a sudden silence pervaded the tumultuous assembly ; and all eyes were fixed on the youthful prisoner who stood pale, stern, and nerved with high resolve, defying the iniquitous magistrate on his very judgment-seat ! — A constable of the court attempted to drag her from the bar.

“ No, no ! ” cried Lebon, with a smile of bitter irony, “ let the lady proceed ! ” and in terms of the coarsest description, he requested her to favour him with the conclusion of her maledictory oration.

“ I have done ! ” said Euphrosine, in an altered voice, while tears of wounded delicacy stole down her cheeks. “ I have nothing left to urge ; — for what avail the murmurs of the lamb within the grasp of a beast of prey ? — Yet trust me, my voice — small and worthless as it is — may reach unto the throne of Omnipotence ! — And as the living babe now perisheth in the pit with its mother, even so shall it be done unto thee, and more also ! ”

Valazy felt transfixed as he glanced from the inspired

figure of the prophetess to the countenance of her judge, where every fiendish and malignant passion appeared concentrated. But the murmurs of the assembly, whose transitory panic soon relaxed into rage at the insult offered to their tribunal, burst on all sides around him, like the surges of a chafing ocean; and while Euphrosine was hastily put aside by the minions of Lebon, old Delplanque himself was thrust forward for examination. Involuntarily Camille recoiled on his seat; prepared by his conviction of the old man's feebleness and egotism, for a degrading exhibition of human imbecility. The first pompous response of the ex-mercier excited at once the risibility of the court, before which he was cited as the "Citizen Delplanque, accused of aiding and abetting the practices of certain nobles and royalists."

"My name, gentlemen citizens," said he, "is Jean Thomas Alexandre Delplanque; formerly a mercantile *employé* of the court of France."

"A *tradesman* of the queen?" inquired one of the clerks of the tribunal, pen in hand.

"Mercer by appointment to her majesty and the princesses!" replied the old man with his accustomed flourish; "who may be said to have aided the practices of the court, in so far as he has eaten with gratitude the bread of its bestowing. For years, my family, my wife, my daughter, were distinguished by the favour of the court of Versailles——"

"I must be permitted to warn my client," said Voiscnon, hastily rising from his seat near the official table, "that he need not incriminate himself by entering into particulars unexact by the interrogatories of the commission."

"I know it, *citoyen notaire*,—I know it!" cried the old man, impatient of interruption. "But neither my silence nor your arguments will avail to save for a single hour the life of my imprudent daughter; and since *that* is forfeited, what would be the value of *my* childless days?—No, sirs! Since my poor Euphrosine is marked for death, I have nothing more to do with caution or de-

fence ; nor will I dishonour the last hour of an honourable life, by denying the royal patrons who are gone before me."

Euphrosine, who had remained standing by her father's side, threw herself upon her knees before him, bathing his hands with tears of veneration and gratitude, for this noble and unexpected display of fortitude and loyalty ; while Voisenon proceeded to address the court in favour of his client. But without suffering him to proceed, Lebon, after a diligent perusal of the instruction contained in his private tablets, demanded that the examination of the daughter should be included in that of the father ; and Euphrosine was roughly raised from her knees, and placed at the bar to meet the interrogatory.

But Valazy felt his own presence of mind unequal to sustain the spectacle of Mademoiselle Delplanque's humiliation. He would have hazarded much to do her service ; he never thought of her save with a thrill of admiration and affection, — affection which, under any other circumstances than those in which he was involved, must have ripened into warmth of attachment. Nay, sometimes, in moments which forced with degrading prominence on his notice the self-abasement with which he clung to ties above his attainment, he had been prompted to upbraid himself with wilful insensibility to the merits and partiality of a being so well assorted to his condition and predilections as Euphrosine Delplanque.

And to see such a woman baited by the injurious taunts of a ruffian, — insulted by the overhearing arrogance of a bench of sans-culotte ministers of justice, — and, finally, perhaps, dragged forth to unresisting slaughter ! — A cold dew rose on his forehead at the anticipation ; and hastily rising from his seat, and quitting the tribunal of blood, he hurried along the streets towards the bridge crossing the Scarpe to avoid the clamorous cries of exultation rising from the mob in the market-place, where a permanent guillotine was erected, and where the populace waited patiently for the tribunal to disgorge some fresh victim to be offered up for their gratification !

Spring was already budding, and the gardens through

which the irritated Valazy pursued his course were clothed with the exuberance of early blossoms, rendering the orchard-suburbs of every French town so gay and beautiful towards the close of April.—The pastures were bright with field-flowers ; and where the waters of the Scarpe went eddying along through the fertile meadows, tufts of yellow iris and other aquatic plants reflected back the cheering radiance of sunshine. But Camille pressed his hand upon his eyes, as if to shut out the spectacle of the creation and its loveliness,—as if to efface all images connected with man and his contaminating influence !—It seemed as if the spirits of evil had obtained a sanction of authority over the soil of France, and were walking abroad visibly in their accursedness. As he hurried along with agitated footsteps, he execrated aloud the officious zeal with which he had preserved the innocent Euphrosine from the axe of the assassin, only to prolong her martyrdom by eighteen months of wearisome imprisonment, ending in trying exposure to the most merciless of tribunals !

Unable to endure the suspense under which he laboured, he turned towards the city, with an intention of seeking further information at the house of Voisenon ; but as he passed the Cemetery without the city gate, he perceived an excited and clamorous mob, conveying to the common pit prepared with quicklime for the victims of the conventional committee, the remains of those whom he had recently beheld animated by the impulses of life and health !

With averted eyes, he turned aside from the reeking basket which he believed to contain the body of the enthusiastic and beautiful Euphrosine !

CHAPTER VI.

Is there a sight more touching and sublime
 Than to behold a creature, who, till grief
 Had taught her lofty spirit how to climb
 Above vexation, — and whose fragile leaf,
 While yet 'twas blossoming in a genial clime,
 Trembled at every breath, and sought relief
 If Heaven but yielded to lower, — suddenly
 Grow vigorous to fortune, and defy
 The pelting storm, that in its might comes down
 To beat it to the earth — To see a rose
 Which in its beauty a frown
 Had withered from its stem, — 'mid wintry snows
 Lift up its head unrooping? A. A. WATTS.

“WHAT are you doing here?” cried Voisenon, hastily closing the door of his study, as Camille presented himself before him. “Come in, if you value your life! — Are you not aware that the bloodhounds are unloosed upon your track?”

“I know not even to what you allude. But before you explain yourself, tell me I beseech you how she encountered her fate — how ——”

“The young girl Delplanque? — Alas! the bitterness of death is not yet past for that noble and unfortunate creature! — Her father was condemned to immediate execution, and is now — poor old man! — at rest. But his worst pang, in laying down his life, arose from the procrastination of his helpless daughter’s sentence. — She will not suffer till to-morrow.”

Camille gazed upon the worthy notary with tearful and inquiring eyes.

“Nay!” said Voisenon, replying to his earnest look; “I know not *why*, unless to gratify the monstrous caprice of our new legislator, who but too well understands the art of varying his torments. But yourself, Monsieur Valazy — how, and when, do you purpose to quit the city? — You are surely aware that one of the most pressing interrogations addressed to Euphrosine Delplanque regarded your present residence and modes of life?”

"And she replied ——"

"That for months past she had known nothing of your movements."

"What interest has a man like Joseph Lebon in the destiny of an obscure individual like myself?"

"The president appeared to frame his inquiries according to the instruction of his tablets."

"Then he has been doubtless instigated against the unfortunate Delplanque family by the malice of Maximilien Valazy!" cried Camille, in the deepest affliction.

"It matters little by whom. — *Their* doom is fixed; — and yours, should you be detected in Arras, will scarcely prove less summary. Let me implore you, therefore, to depart without delay."

"Shall you see her — shall you see poor Euphrosine again — before ——"

"I am to visit her this evening in prison," replied Voisenon, touched by the distress of his young friend. "My professional authority procures me this privilege. Shall I bear her any message on your part?"

"None — none! — You must suffer me to accompany you."

"To what purpose? Believe me, — and, alas! my experience too often enables me to avouch the fact, — these parting interviews serve only to aggravate the tortures of the condemned, and bequeath an agonising recollection to the survivor."

"Heaven knows I would not willingly inflict one additional pang on so innocent, so amiable a sufferer! — Yet I *must* see her, Monsieur Voisenon. — The happiness of a whole family hangs upon a secret in the keeping of Euphrosine Delplanque."

"At least, wait till it is dusk," said Voisenon. "I cannot suffer you to adventure the danger of appearing in the streets of Arras. I have interest enough with the governor of the château to procure your admission. At nightfall we will visit my unhappy client."

With a sinking heart and faltering step, accordingly, Valazy followed the guidance of his friend through various obscure passages of the town, towards the gloomy retreat

of the Bastille of Arras ; and after having removed by a *douceur* of assignats the scruples of the turnkey, they were ushered through damp and hollow passages dimly lighted by an iron lamp carried by their companion, into the cell inhabited by the *citoyenne* Delplanque.

" You have not been very courteous in the assignment of her lodgings," said Voisenon, in a propitiating tone of jocularity to the man, as he selected from his rusty bunch the key of the dungeon. " This hole, if I mistake not, is below the level of the ditch, and a fountain-head of pestilence."

" *Tudieu !* What need to be dainty ? The girl was sent from Paris tarred with the sign of a black sheep. What matters *her* lodging for to-night, who will sleep to-morrow in the pit of the guillotined ? — I warrant her hard pillow *there* will cost her no uneasy nights."

Valazy would gladly have retarded his intrusion on the captive till his approach had been announced by his friend, dreading that his sudden appearance might startle her depressed spirits. But the *guichetier*, little susceptible of the delicacies of life, thrust him forward as soon as the heavy door creaked upon its hinges, exclaiming, " Cheer up, *citoyenne !* I have brought you friends to make your last evening pass pleasantly." He was even moved, by the liberality of the visitors, to deposit on the floor, for their advantage, the flaring and fetid lamp, whose light was regarded as an indulgence by the wretches committed to his charge.

As the turnkey departed on his routine of business after carefully locking the door of the cell, Voisenon, advancing with fatherly kindness towards the wasted figure which raised itself from a straw pallet in a corner of the dungeon, to welcome his approach, was about to explain the intrusion of his companion, when Camille urged by his swelling emotions beyond all observation of forms, rushed towards Euphrosine, and kneeling beside her, clasped her to his bosom with sobs of uncontrollable distress.

" Alas, alas !" cried she, not recognising him by the imperfect light—" Have I yet a friend thus capable of sympathy in my miseries ?—I thought the only heart

which could beat with a quickened throb for my sake, was at rest."

"Euphrosine, do you not remember me?" cried Camille, withdrawing his unfolding arms. "You once deigned to adopt me as a brother; have I dishonoured the title, that you thus shrink from me?"

A slight scream of delight burst from the lips of the prisoner at the sound of his voice. "Camille Valazy—Camille,—come to bid farewell to poor Euphrosine!"—cried she. "Have you then still an interest in the life you once so generously preserved, and then so scornfully resigned to the keeping of its enemies?—Long, very long, did I flatter myself, Camille, that you would interpose in my behalf;—that again, like a guardian angel, you would penetrate into my dungeon, and bear me away a second time to light and life! Long, very long, did I nightly start from my sleep in dreams of an approaching deliverance; but only to add the dawn of another day to the sum of my wearisome captivity.—You came not—*none* came—all had forgotten me;—except, alas! those workers of iniquity, whose vigilance of mischief is unremitting!"

"You wrong me!" faltered Camille, deeply touched by the feeble tones of her voice, so changed from the lofty inspiration it had breathed in addressing the tribunal of Lebon.—"You wrong me, Euphrosine!—On my life—my honour—I have left no effort unattempted to trace out the place of your imprisonment. Some evil agency has till this day prevailed against the discovery."

"As I can truly testify!"—interposed the worthy Voisenon. "Monsieur Valazy has, on many occasions, made me the instrument of his inquiries concerning yourself and your unfortunate father."

"Call him not unfortunate," said the prisoner in faltering accents. "My father's probation is ended;—how gloriously for himself—how triumphantly for the filial pride of his unhappy child!—But, gracious Heaven!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands in sudden affright, as, through some association with her father's appearance before the judgment seat of Lebon, the recollection of Ca-

mille's danger glanced upon her mind.—“What evil chance has brought you, Monsieur Valazy, to this horrible place?—Your life is beset,—a price placed on your arrest;—your cousin's hatred pursues you with unabated intensity.—Quit this spot—let me entreat you, quit this spot.—Once recognised, you leave it not again!”

“I am aware how much I owe to your forbearance,” replied Valazy. “And were it not certain that my surrender would but add another victim to the triumph of Lebon, without remitting by a single hour the execution of your sentence, trust me I had not hesitated to give myself up to justice.”

“Think not of it!” cried Euphrosine with eagerness. “For me, I have placed myself beyond the reach of mercy. The worst aggravation of my fate would be the knowledge that another victim was about to be added to the martyrs of the cause for which I am to perish. But do not loiter! Let the darkness of the night cover your flight from this plague-stricken city——”

“No, Euphrosine, my secret is in the safe keeping of the two trusty friends before me; my person unknown to Lebon and his satellites. I have no fear of molestation in quitting Arras to-morrow.”

“*To-morrow!*” reiterated Mademoiselle Delplanque. “Alas! I have ceased to count the alternation of night and day!—A few hours, and the mighty dawn of eternity will brighten the gloom which is upon my soul. But, for my sake, I pray you, leave this place! You have comforted me by the token of human interest vouchsafed in this parting interview. You will still further re-assure me by the certainty that none but the eyes of strangers will witness my last struggle,—my ignominious death. My soul is resolute, Camille!—my heart anchored upon a rock of eternal hope!—But this frail body,—this shrinking frame of flesh,—may yet bring shame upon me by its paltry weakness.”

“No, my dear young lady, no!” exclaimed Voisenon, taking her hand with the tenderness of paternal interest. “On that score you have nothing to fear. Such fortitude as yours will be upheld by the protection of Heaven, to be

an example and a token in the land. One step more will conduct you in all safety through the last ordeal, to the blessed haven of your eternal reward."

"No!" replied Euphrosine Delplanque, in calmer and clearer accents, "that consolatory hope has abandoned me. I have too long—too closely contemplated the moment of rendering my account, to deceive myself as to the extent of my earthly transgressions. That I am here, that the grey hairs of my father have been polluted by the hand of the executioner, is the work of my vain temerity; of that visionary loyalty which springs from the presumptuous prompting of human vanity.—I loved the queen, without examining the motives of my love!—I loved her as Marie Antoinette of France, who had deigned to notice the obscure child of the mercer Delplanque;—not for her virtues,—not for her fortitude—her——"

"You loved her with the duty of a loyal subject," interrupted Voisenon. "The best of human actions is scarcely framed to meet so trying a scrutiny as you would impose."

"The best and worst of human actions *must*!"—said Euphrosine, with devout reverence. "In the loneliness of my captivity, I have discovered the one sole principle of my unhappy life to have been a snare too ably spread for an ambitious heart! Negligent of the duties of my sex and age, I forgot mine own people and my father's house; and presumptuously brought down the lightnings of judgment on that obscure roof, which, but for my rash experiment, might have escaped the storm! I despised the voice of my father,—of my poor old father!—I turned aside from the warning of friend and foe. Heaven will judge the hardness and impenitence of my heart!"

"No!" cried Camille—"no!—Such generosity—such intrepidity—such noble forgetfulness of self, must not be thus traduced."

"Euphrosine!" said the good old Voisenon, motioning Valazy to silence, "in these days of anarchy, when the shepherds of the fold are no longer permitted to watch over their flock, a crook should be in every aged hand. My child!—my poor girl,—though it is denied me to console

thy parting moments by the sacrament of thy faith, I tell thee be of good cheer, I tell thee that thy sins are forgiven thee !— Thy present mood of lowliness and self-examination better becomes the departure of a Christian spirit, than the triumphant pæans breathed by the minions of the church round the death-bed of kings ! — Like the divine Institutor of thy faith, thou shalt die in ignominy ; but like him, thy soul shall be lifted up in the glories of eternity !”

At the solemn sound of the old man's voice, Mademoiselle Delplanque knelt down at his feet ; and crossing her hands reverentially on her bosom, received his benediction with as much inward satisfaction as if it had proceeded from the sovereign pontiff. Camille, who had been silent from profound emotion, cast his eyes on that kneeling figure, whose white garments, set forth by the filthy obscurity of the dungeon, imparted to its graceful outline an air of virgin purity befitting some saintly martyr of the church. He advanced to raise her from her knees ; but on becoming conscious of his approach, she appeared to repel his touch. Unbidden tears rushed into her eyes, and a crimson flush succeeded to the deadly paleness of her countenance, as she seated herself once more beside Voisenon on her wretched pallet.

“ Nay—speak not to me again, Camille Valazy,” said she. “ Bring back my thoughts no more to this wilderness of human sorrow ! Thou hast been to me as one of the sharpest thorns of my crown of probation !—What avails to deny it now, that all earthly things have become unsubstantial shadows in my sight !—I loved thee, Camille ! loved thee with that infatuated tenderness, which, once existent in the heart of woman, defies estrangement—coldness—contempt ! Under its influence, my household-home became distasteful to me,—my pillow sleepless ; and the vague dreams of my enthusiasm arose from the gloomy certainty that domestic happiness,—the patient—humble—hopeful happiness of wedded life,—could never exist for Euphrosine !”

With what painful eagerness did Valazy listen to the outpouring of the wounded heart he had rejected.

“ My father — forgive his partial judgment — first kindled my delusive affection by an assurance of thine. He told me I was beloved — and very easy did I find it to believe him, and to love again. — But when I discovered with the bitterest disappointment the infatuated passion cherished by Camille towards another, I closed up the wounds of my bosom as with the searing of iron. — I turned my hopes from all prospect of womanly joy. — I tried to fill my mind with the vain aspirations of enthusiasm. — I made the weal of my country, the person of the queen, the objects of my idolatry. Yet even then, Camille, I estranged not my soul from thy destiny ; but regarding thee with a sister’s partial pride, attempted to involve thee in a career which I regarded as that of virtue and distinction.”

“ And did I withhold myself from such gracious endeavours ? ” — said Camille, in a low and agitated voice. — “ Did I not, while occasion offered, fulfil the duties committed to my charge ? ”

“ But not at the instigation of Euphrosine ! Do not deceive thyself ! Throughout the progress of events involving the destiny of thy native land, — thine anointed prince — thy parent — thy friends, — one single motive has urged thy feeble and vacillating course — ”

Camille started indignantly.

“ For how could a course be otherwise than vacillating, which derived its impulses from a fatal, a *guilty* passion ? — While the prospect of death embittered the cruel days of my captivity in La Force, I made a solemn vow that should I survive to witness the re-establishment of social order, I would expiate the delusions of my youth in a convent, — and from the moment of that resolution, began to look without fear or misconception upon these things. I saw *thee* fixed for life at the feet of one who will reward thy passionate devotion by turning from thee in the day of her prosperity as from the son of the bondswoman.”

“ These are harsh words,” interrupted old Voisenon.

“ Let her speak on ! ” said Camille, with great earnestness. “ I will not shrink from a lesson so replete with truth.”

"Thou thinkest, Camille, that in the disorganised frame of society, the distinctions of birth will become despised in France.—Never!—This weak vanity of human nature is an innate and ineffaceable failing,—common to thee, to me, to all gradations of the living.—Even thou, Camille,—deny it not,—wert tempted to reject the idea of an union with Euphrosine, chiefly as beholding in her a mercer's daughter! My very virtues became obliterated in thy sight by association with my low degree; and had I been highly born, thou wouldst have looked with admiration on actions, which appeared suggested by intrusive temerity on the part of a tradesman's child."

Many a conscious reminiscence started to the mind of Camille on this accusation.

"But it was not of *thy* frailties I had thought to speak; it was of my own. May thy persevering attachment meet a happier reward than I dare anticipate; and if, in some future hour of domestic union with the daughter of Navelles, thy recollections should recur to one who loved thee without hope or desire of return,—to one who was wont to receive with gratitude thy merest token of regard——"

"Have mercy upon me!" cried Valazy, falling at her feet. "I have not deserved this cruel probation.—I nourish no such hope—no such expectations. Emiline dwells as a daughter beneath my mother's roof—for she is homeless—friendless—destitute. Do not, however, suppose that my interest in your feelings is effaced by the claims of hers. In the engrossing spectacle of your misfortunes, I have even forgotten to seek from you that intelligence respecting the child so long divided from her bosom by participation in your destiny!"

"How?—has not little Emiline been restored to her?—Have these long weary months elapsed, and——"

"Away—off—fly!"—cried the turnkey, suddenly bursting open the rusty hinges of the cell, and attempting to thrust out the person of Voisenon and his companion. "The citoyen president is on a round of visits this unlucky evening, and will not care to be interrupted by strangers."

But Valazy could not so instantly tear himself from the

clinging hands of Euphrosine. In spite of Voisenon's exhortations, he continued to linger in agonised hope of her explanation touching the disposal of the child.

"He is here!" — cried the turnkey, with a furious oath, "and a pretty responsibility you have left upon my shoulders."

"Ha! who are these?" inquired Lebon, with harsh insolence, as he pushed open the door of the cell. "Have I not forbidden all chaffering and gossiping with condemned prisoners? — Close the door, and turn the lantern on these night-birds, varlet!"

"Citoyen commissaire!" said Voisenon, with an air of stern self-possession, "I am here on an errand of business with my client, in hope of persuading her to tender such submission to the Conventional Committee as ——"

"Think you the committee will endure to be trifled with by the caprices of the offspring of an insignificant burgess of Arras? No! since you must needs be meddling where your calling is not in question, stay and learn my errand with this mincing dainsel. — And the fellow bearing you company?"

"Is my clerk and official witness, *citoyen commissaire*."

"Officious, rather, citoyen notaire, if in any thing resembling yourself. — Rise up, Euphrosine Delplanque! Rise up forthwith, and listen!"

The prisoner feebly obeyed; attempting to assume the accustomed firmness of her demeanour as she confronted the ferocious magistrate.

"On thy coming here, wretched girl, know that thou wert especially intrusted to my attention by a worthy brother-labourer of mine in Paris, who bad me tender thy paltry life, — not for any value that it bore, — but like some base vessel preserved for the sake of its contents. There is a secret in thy keeping of some moment to the deputy Maximilien Valazy?"

Camille instinctively moved forward, resolved to declare himself, on the slightest indication that such a measure might prove advantageous to Mademoiselle Delplanque; but Voisenon grasped his hand with an admonitory warning.

“ To this end have I deferred the consummation of criminal justice upon thy person, till I might possess myself of the ultimate views of so stanch a friend to the cause of the Revolution, as my good friend the *citoyen Max*. — But the courier of this night has brought thy fiat of judgment, my dainty damsel. I am advised to smoothe the path of thy departure with the pleasing intelligence that the information thou hast thought proper to withhold, has been otherwise obtained. The persons whose concealment thou hast abetted, are discovered and denounced ! ”

Euphrosine could not repress a start of terror and surprise.

“ And, moreover, as my crony Maximilien will visit me to-morrow night, on his way to a place called Manoir on the Boulognese coast on some errand connected with the discovery, I propose to recreate him on his arrival with the spectacle of thy contumacious head in a charger ; and so — short shrift to thee, my Cicero in petticoats, — for thou must die at sunrise.”

“ I am prepared,” said Euphrosine with proud resignation. “ I have but one prayer to make. These gentlemen, these intruders who would disturb my last moments with cares and interests of poor account to a parting soul, — cause them, I beseech you, to be put forth, that I may no longer be perplexed by their molestations.”

“ Is it so ? ” cried Lebon, slapping his hand with violence upon the shoulder of Voisenon. “ Then is the old crow a bird of better omen than I imagined ! — Silly girl ! thou dost but labour to place a scourge of chastisement in my hands ! — Put them forth, quotha ? — put forth thy ghostly comforters ? — No, no ! since thou abhorrest their exhortations with so absolute a detestation, I can have no better pleasure than in charging them to pass the night here in thy cell. Soldiers ! — ” (the clang of military accoutrements was heard in the corridor) “ observe that no person quits the prison after my departure, till the execution-drum at sunrise ! ”

“ Oh ! no — no — no ! ” cried Euphrosine — who heard in this command the death-warrant of Camille, — throwing herself at the feet of Lebon, and clinging to his

knees. "Show me at least this mercy. — Leave me but one solitary hour to make my peace with Heaven."

"Thou hast done too much to mar the peace of the dwellers upon earth. Firebrand that thou art! — I would gladly see thee shed tears enough to quench the flames of thine own mischievous ignition. These *prosateurs* quit not thy presence to-night."

"I protest against this infringement of the liberty of the subject!" cried Valazy, bursting forward in spite of the efforts made by Voisenon to detain him. "Unaccused, — undenounced, — unarrested, — there is no pretence for detaining us in a manner thus arbitrary and illegal. Come what may, I appeal against so unwarrantable a proceeding."

"Well mouthed, my Oroondates of the plea-shop! — The liberty of the subject! — the liberty of a scurvy notary's scurvy clerk — *Que Diable!* The Convention might extend its audience from now till the next century, were it compelled to bestow its attention on such appeals! — The frogs in the marsh, methinks, might know better by this time, than to intrude upon Jupiter with their importunate petitions."

"Nevertheless, citizen president," said Voisenon sternly, "even the Convention is accountable to the body of the people, by whose voice it was summoned into being; and ———"

"Silence! — In the court of the commission this morning I had an abundant share of thy frothy logic. Keep it for the spiritual consolation of thy fair hostess here; and beware lest in the morning I send thee to ballast her passage over the Styx."

With a scowl of malicious hatred, Lebon stalked from the cell; and was about to be followed by his faithful *guichetier*, when Camille rushing on the ruffian threw him to the earth, and cried out to Voisenon to follow him. But the moment he reached the passage, scantily lighted by a lamp at the other extremity, he perceived that it was occupied by sentries, whose crossed bayonets instantly intercepted his movements.

Compelled to return, he was thrust back into the fatal den; and the grated door was closed against the remon-

stances of Voisenon and Valazy, amid the execrations of the infuriated turnkey, and the jeering laughter of the soldiers.

CHAPTER VII.

L'art de subjuguer une nation est donc celui de la terrifier! — Les Romains ont bâti des temples à la peur, la nation Française en masse lui doit un large autel! — *Essai sur les Mœurs Parisiens.*

“ TO THE CITOYENNE DUMANOIR, CI-DEVANT MARCHIONESS
DE ST. FLORENTIN.

“ *Aristocrate, je te retrouve!* Emiline de Navelles, — child of my arch enemy, thou art again within my grasp! The influence of the census hath reached even thy obscurity; and though the cunning of Madelon Valazy's son — thy friend, or perchance thy paramour — by enrolling himself a soldier of the Republic, places him for a time beyond my reach — yet thou — my Emiline Dumanoir, art denounced! — The tribunal of Lebon gapes for thee, — the guillotine shall render thy children orphans, — the proscription, beggars; — unless, (and mark the merciful suggestion of the alternative,) unless thou evade the warrant of arrest by becoming the wife of a servant of the state. Within twenty-fours I shall be at thy feet. — Prepare to accept me as a husband, or to be escorted to Arras as the prisoner of the conventional committee.

“ MAXIMILIEN VALAZY,
“ *Deputy to the Conventional Assembly.*”

Such was the missive placed in the hands of the unfortunate Emiline, and read aloud at her suggestion by Léonie de Mirepoix. Speechless — motionless — with clasping hands and quivering lips — she listened to the recital; nor till her child was considerably placed by Madelon within her arms, and tears relieved her overcharged feelings, could she give utterance to the emotions struggling in her bosom.

“ And has it come to this ? ” she exclaimed in frantic irritation. “ Have all our delays — our irresolutions — our boasted security — ended in this worst of destinies ! — Marry *him* ! — escape the scaffold by screening myself in the arms of an assassin red with the blood of my father ! — Never ! — Welcome shame — destitution — death — before such base humiliation ! ”

“ Think you we have any prospect of your son’s return within the fatal period ? ” cried Léonie, addressing Madame Valazy in an anxious whisper.

“ Alas ! ” cried the afflicted Madelon, striving to conceal the tears gushing down her aged cheeks, “ how can I venture to pronounce ? — He should have been here last night, — this morning. He is probably now on the road. But a storm is gathering — he may be yet delayed ! — God grant that some evil may not have overtaken my son ! ”

Grievous evils *had* in truth overtaken him ! — Since his arrival at Arras, every moment had been marked by some painful incident : — his discovery of Euphrosine, — her trial and condemnation, — her unsatisfactory details relative to the lost child of Madame de St. Florentin, — her touching confession relative to herself, — the announcement of Maximilien’s arrival put forth by Lebon, — and finally his own sentence of detention while the wolves of destruction were loosed upon the helpless prey sheltered in his deserted home ! — What hours of torture did the despotic sentence of the tyrant of Arras afford during that interminable night to his patience !

Yet he dared not give vent to the galling impatience of his mind ! With Euphrosine before his eyes, — mild, humble, resigned, — the condemned Euphrosine, whose moments were numbered, whose feelings nerved to meet the last agonising throes of her earthly struggle, and the first and still more awful consciousness of her mortal change, — how could he venture to disturb her tranquillity by the intrusion of his selfish sorrows and anxieties ? Amid his first irrepressible murmurs, he detected her eyes glittering with tears fixed mournfully upon him ; and was sensible of the indelicacy of expressing his eagerness to

break through the vexatious thralldom inflicted on him by Lebon, since it afforded to the uncomplaining sufferer the solace of human companionship during the last weary hours of her earthly pilgrimage. For some time, the worthy Voisenon attempted to sustain the courage of one of his youthful companions, and dispel the forebodings of the other, by kindly exhortations and Christian counsels. But the old man was worn out by the anxious efforts of the day. He had not a stake at issue momentous as theirs.—His head gradually declined upon his bosom as, seated upon the floor, he rested himself against the humid walls of the dungeon ;—and when at length he sank into a heavy and unnatural sleep, Camille and Euphrosine were left alone.

The chilly twilight of spring, slanting down from the narrow grating of the cell, soon mingled its grey uncertain light with the smoky glare of the lamp fleckering upon the pavement ; enabling Euphrosine to discern the total exhaustion of frame, and abstraction of faculties, in which Valazy stood leaning against that iron-knobbed door separating him from the interests of the inhabited earth. Involuntarily, she rose from her seat, and traversing the few steps of the long narrow chamber that divided them, stood before him with a beseeching air.

“ Fear not to unfold your sorrow to me, Camille,” she faltered. “ Fear not to speak of these impending evils to a dying sister, a grateful friend. I warned you against that overweening passion, while guilty from the opposing claims of a living husband.—I warn you still, when I reflect upon the harsh reflections it will compel you to undergo—the bitter contumely to which it will expose every generous impulse of your heart. But not for these reproofs, for these misgivings, do I withhold my sympathy from your sorrow ! ”

“ Forgive my selfishness ! ” cried Camille, clasping her hands tenderly within his own ;—“ forgive me, dearest Euphrosine ! I am indeed most miserable.”

“ Alas ! the origin of your grief was revealed in the changeful countenance with which you listened to Lebon’s announcement of Maximilien Valazy’s detection of your

retreat. I read in your looks that Emiline is sheltered at Manoir ! ”

“ You judge aright ! For my *own* safety, it is to me as the cobweb on yonder rafter,—a thing of nought,—which a breath may obliterate without notice ; but for *her*—for Emiline ! ”—He shuddered ;—a spasmodic contraction convulsed his countenance.

“ Yes ! her destiny is indeed more appalling than mine ! ” replied Euphrosine, with terrible composure. “ Death—*certain* death—will soon remit this tortured spirit into the hands of my heavenly Father. But Emiline de St. Florentin hath earthly trials to undergo—uncertain in their measure and character—alas ! how awfully uncertain !—Grieve, then, for her—grieve for *her* ;—nor fear that I should envy your pity, or blaine your tenderness. Trust me, she has my prayers as fervently as your own.”

“ My generous admonitress—my better angel ! ” said Valazy, looking upon her with the reverence he might have bestowed upon her disembodied spirit ;—“ how does my mind bow down before you ! Well had it been for me to have followed more implicitly your guidance !—I feel how vainly my life has been lavished—how idly its warm affections wasted. But it is too late for either of us to retract or amend our destinies ! My baffled spirit wrestles vainly with the irritating sense of its impotence ;—of its infirmity of purpose, — its feeble, despicable inefficiency. Oh, Euphrosine ! Euphrosine ! teach me the secret of your heavenly patience, your noble victory over selfish passions ! ”

“ Open your heart to the Almighty as I do, and he will fill it with his majesty beyond the participation of all meaner feelings,” said Euphrosine, raising her eyes to heaven, and devoutly pressing her folded hands on her bosom.—“ But hark !—hear you not the cries of the early boatmen upon the river ?—heard you not a low—hollow—distant sound ?—Camille ! it is the morning drum of the garrison !—My friends, pray for me —*with* me !—The hour of my deliverance hath struck,—but it is one of darkness and trembling.—My God !—my mighty support,—be not thou far from me ! ”

Already Voisenon had folded her in a paternal embrace. The companions of Euphrosine sobbed aloud in contemplation of her fortitude ; nor did either of them for a moment suffer their personal anxieties to interfere with their sympathy in the fate of this heroic and most innocent victim. But on their own account, as Mademoiselle Delplanque from the first predicted, they had little to apprehend. Joseph Lebon was too well aware of the necessity of propitiating the tribunal of Arras, to provoke its animosity by further injury practised against one of its members so respectable in his degree as the notary Voisenon ; and regarding Camille in the light of his clerk, had issued orders previous to retiring to rest, that their enlargement should take place when their female companion was led forth to the market-place, where she was sentenced to stand for the mockery of the rabble, two hours previous to her execution ! The blood froze in the heart of Valazy, as he heard the measured tramp of the soldiers in the corridor leading to the cell.

" They come ! " — said old Voisenon, in a hoarse whisper. " Euphrosine ! — the God of mercy sustain thee ! — Shrink not, dear child, from this cup of bitterness."

" *Of triumph !* " — interrupted his fated companion, with a sudden assumption of energy. " No ! — I am not abandoned. — The aid of Heaven has put strength into my soul. — Friends ! dear friends — farewell ! — Camille — whom I have so loved — my father's friend — my own — farewell ! "

The arms of her companions were still fervently entwined round her, when the door of the cell was flung open, and a file of soldiers became visible in the passage.

" Citoyens, you are free ! " said the surly turnkey, who was commissioned with the president's commands. " Be pleased to take yourselves off without delay, that ye interrupt not the special course of justice." And in a moment, without the slightest power of resistance, Voisenon and Valazy were shoved forward, and marched fiercely onwards between the soldiers filling the corridor. The last

sound they heard, in spite of the heavy tread of their guards, was the voice of Euphrosine, exclaiming, "No! do not bind me—do not bind my hands.—No cords! Indeed I am submissive.—You have nothing—nothing to fear from my resistance."

"Can this be borne?"—cried Camille, as Voisenon, having passed the wicket, attempted to guide his staggering steps along the street in which the prison was situated, towards his own residence. "No, no! do not drag me away!—Tell me not of danger.—I must—I will see her to the last.—I have no fortitude for this struggle—this cruel trial!—They are murdering her!—Let me go—let me die—Euphrosine—Euphrosine!"

It was fortunate for Valazy that the early hour of the morning prevented his violence from attracting the attention of persons less favourably disposed towards him than Voisenon. Having succeeded in confining him in his own abode during the fatal hour of the execution, the worthy notary profited by this interval, to arrange the preparatives for his immediate departure from Arras.

"Every moment you remain here is fraught with peril to you and yours," said he, attempting to rouse Camille from the stupor of grief which succeeded his first paroxysm. "Grieve not for Euphrosine. She is at rest! If you have friends or inmates dependent upon you, to whom the arrival of Maximilien Valazy affords a prospect of danger, fly to your defenceless home, and place them in security ere it be too late!"

"She is at rest!"—mechanically repeated Valazy—"that generous heart has ceased to beat!"—

"For Euphrosine Delplanque, my dear young friend, your exertions and your pity are alike profitless. Think of the living."

"True!"—cried Valazy, starting up, impetuously. "The birds of prey are on the wing, and woe to the nest exposed to their desolating swoop! I *must* hasten to quit this city."

"Your horse has been saddled at my suggestion, and waits you at the postern gate of my garden opening to the ramparts. I will not detain you to say farewell. Fly,

Monsieur Valazy — fly this fatal spot. May we meet again under happier auspices.”

Instinctively Camille obeyed the counsel of his friend ; and having passed the gates of the city without further interruption than the necessity of exhibiting his *carte civique*, a species of republican certificate in general use, he pursued his way to St. Pol with the speed of one fleeing from the pursuit of an enemy. The very aspect of the inhabitants of Arras was to him as that of a company of assassins ; its very atmosphere appeared charged with the sighs of the expiring Euphrosine. So young — so beautiful — so innocent — to be given up to slaughter ; — without one arm — one voice uplifted in her defence ! — No wonder that he fled from the scene of such a sacrifice, with curses on his lips, and the hope of vengeance burning in his soul !

Camille had been many hours on the road, before he recovered sufficiently to determine on any future measures. In the dizzy sickness of his mind and body, he seemed to live over again the dreadful scene of his recent tortures ; every step appeared to spurn the bleeding body of some mangled royalist. Pausing in the little town of St. Pol to give an hour's respite to his panting horse, he resolved to avoid the environs of Samer, — to the municipal authorities of which place Maximilien was probably indebted for his information relative to the inmates of Manoir. Having skirted the ridge of hills lying between the Paris road and Desvres, he arrived early in the afternoon upon that point of the *côte* which overlooks the fertile and richly wooded valley of Samer.

A dark cloud was rising from the sea, as if about to traverse like a menacing giant the vale outstretched below. Thunder was already murmuring in the distant horizon, as if to announce the coming enemy ; and occasionally a lurid flash broke from the obscurity extending over the scene. Upon the verge of the hill, Camille paused for a moment in involuntary contemplation of the solemnity of the landscape. The summits of the lofty sand-hills seemed to reflect on the glaring whiteness of their fissured ridge, the vivid flashes glancing at intervals over the warren ;

and as the dark mass of stormy clouds rolled onward in slow and dreadful majesty athwart the valley, not a breath was stirring to agitate the long streamers of coarse grass overhanging the heathy precipice along whose verge he was skirting the valley.

Again and again, the thunder peals reverberated from the hills of Quéhen and Herquélignes, among the dales opening towards the sea. The little church of Hesdin l'Abbé appeared to shrink beneath the shelter of its ancient elms ; and when the first heavy storm-drops fell on the parched earth, the shepherds of Desvres were seen at a distance betaking themselves to the insufficient shelter of the turfen hovels dotted upon the *côte*, to afford a retreat from the vicissitudes of the atmosphere. And as his horse swerved and started from the fierce brilliancy of the lightning, he directed the intensity of a lover's glance towards the pointed roofs and gables of Manoir, rising above their wooded screen, and presenting the ancient and obsolete character of the manorial houses of Picardy,—half farm, half fort,—commemorated in the illustrations of Froissart.—His heart was softened by a presentiment that he was gazing for the last time on that cherished and familiar landscape. He cast his eyes over the wide sweep of the undulating plain crowned far on the left by the gloomy forests towards Neufchâtel, as if to gather the scene into the treasury of his recollections for future reminiscence and future solace.

“Strange!” murmured he to himself—“strange that these scenes to which I am an alien, should have acquired an interest in my heart, far beyond that of the haunts of my childhood or the busy spot where my prosperity grew as by the decree of Heaven!—Yet wherefore should I marvel at their influence?—Have I not wandered amid these woods,—have I not dwelt beneath that roof, in companionship with *her*?—Have we not stood together beneath these skies which lour upon me *now* with so gloomy a presage, till our hearts, touched by their benignant and balmy influence, were united for a moment in the mutual thrill of devotion and gratitude?—Here, spell-bound by the fascination of her smile—her voice—her

gracious and endearing words,—here, have I forgotten all earthly duties—all earthly cares,—all—all things—but herself! It may be, that I shall become a ranger of distant countries,—homeless—exiled—lonely.—It may be, that in a season of renewed prosperity, I shall dwell once more in the region of my early fortunes; but no change of time or place or destiny will render the scene before me as that of a land of strangers. Commingled in my heart with the best hopes of my existence, it will hallow my dreams as an ineffaceable and blessed image of the past.”

While he traversed a cross road through the copses of the low grounds, towards Manoîr, the storm, following the uncertain attractions of a hilly country bordering the sea, passed away to the west; and the afternoon sun was soon glittering on the budding trees and sparkling on the early blossoms of the farm as if in reproach to his despondency. Familiar with every by-path of the country, he pushed his way across the pastures; and having crossed the little bridge towards the meadows encircling the garden to reach the back entrance, was saluted by young Bénédict, who hastened towards him with a look of dismay.

Without hazarding a word of interrogation, he hurried through the garden. All was deserted—all still as death. But on ascending the flight of steps leading to the door of the sitting room, the first sound that struck his ear was a convulsive sob. For a moment, he paused on the threshold of the open door; on a couch beside which, lay Madame de St. Florentin,—her dress disordered, her eyes closed, and yielding no token of life, save when the slow tears trickled from her sealed eyelids.

“In the name of Heaven, what has befallen her?” exclaimed Camille to the trembling Léonie, who was chafing her hands.—“Can the storm have terrified her thus?”

Mademoiselle de Mirepoix shook her head; and Madelon, in whose bosom little Aglaé was hiding her face from the spectacle of her mother’s terrible condition, pointed out to her son the fatal letter of his kinsman which had now been some hours in the possession of Emilie. At that moment, Madame de St. Florentin, roused by the welcome sound of his voice,

extended her hand towards him ; and while Camille raised it to his lips, Léonie, taking the crushed paper from the couch, motioned an entreaty that he would read it without delay.

Valazy started, as the first hateful sentence of the letter met his eye. His first impulse was to rush into the adjoining chamber, and secure his pistols. He was hastily followed by Léonie.

“ When and where did she receive this insulting letter ? ” cried Camille.

“ By express, and more than three hours ago. Surely, surely, Camille, we might escape into the forest before this miscreant’s arrival ? ”

“ Alas ! your persons have been recognised and denounced. It would be easy to the minions at his disposal to seek out your track ; and a price would doubtless be set upon your arrest.”

“ Yet how many months has our good curé contrived to evade detection ! ”—

“ *His* life wears the protection of personal sanctity in the eyes of the greater number of his parishioners ; and a solitary person, inured to privation, fatigue, and danger, is more susceptible of concealment than two feeble women encumbered by a child ! ”

“ Yet you cannot surely wish that Emiline should *accede* to this loathsome proposal ? ”—faltered Léonie, with an irrepressible shudder.

“ Rather let all perish ! ” was his solemn reply.—There was a deep pause, during which he covered his face with his hands. When he again withdrew them from his features, they were pale and rigid as marble ; and in addressing Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, his measured words appeared impelled from his lips as though by a power beyond his own control.

“ Mademoiselle de Mirepoix,” said he, “ it is for *you* to decide between us ! Judge for your cousin more dispassionately than mine or her own feelings will permit. By uniting herself in marriage with a citizen under the protection of the Republic, she may defy the addresses of even this ruffianly conventionalist.—Let her only by civil

form and in the eyes of man become my wife, and Emiline will be rescued from the arms of her father's murderer!"—

Mademoiselle de Mirepoix started and trembled.

"I see your repugnance—I foresee her own. The pride of patrician blood recoils from even the semblance of such an alliance. Alas, alas! her preservation hangs on this baneful prejudice!"

"You mistake me!" cried Léonie, with emotion; "it was your generous promptitude of purpose which moved my surprise.—Repugnance?—no, no, Camille! you have judged wisely and well.—I was aware that there existed but this alternative. Delicacy alone forbade me to propose to you the sacrifice of your destinies. But Emiline!—will *she* consent?—will there even be time to achieve a legal union?"

"Speak to her. Urge the claims of her child, the devotion of my whole soul. Tell her the legal form which must pass between us is but a shadow interposing to shield her from destruction;—that these nominal ties shall be dissolved the moment returning prosperity shall enable her to resume her independence.—Nay," he continued, gathering courage as the dangers of delay rose before his eyes,—"I will overcome my reserve,—I will myself explain the truth."

Hurrying into the saloon, Camille threw himself once more on his knees before the sufferer. "Emiline!" said he, in a low intense tone, "rouse yourself! Collect your faculties for decision in this terrible crisis. Listen to me with indulgence,—listen to your faithful, your last surviving protector."

"Exert your courage, dearest cousin," added Léonie. "Rescue yourself, your babe, and all who love you, from the destiny by which you are menaced."

"Courage?" faltered the marchioness, gazing wildly round her. "How may courage avail me in such a trial?—How may I venture to dispute the will of Maximilien Valazy?—Let me die, and escape all."

"Hear me!" interposed Camille, detaining her as she attempted to rush from the room in utter distraction—

"Hear me, Emiline ! One alternative remains for your preservation. Unite your destiny with mine by the bond of a civil marriage, and defy the projects of our arch-enemy. As the wife of a republican soldier, the whole authority of the whole realm could not forward his insolent pretensions to your hand. Of myself, need I speak ? — Need I proclaim myself, as ever, the humblest of your vassals, — intent only on your preservation, — disavowing every claim and every right with which an hour of national terror could alone endow me ; — willing, if your safety permit, to quit you for ever on the steps of the altar ; and beholding in you, as in every past emergency, only the object of my reverential and humble idolatry. Emiline ! you are silent — you hide your face from me ? — Emiline ! your decision ?"

"Dearest cousin, you do not hear the generous proposals of Camille ?" — cried Léonie, hastily recapitulating the terms offered by Valazy, who had risen from his knees, and was standing aloof, with a thousand contending emotions struggling in his heart.

"Many things will occur to fetter your decision — *the pride of birth — the pride of fortune — and after all these, the memory of your husband !*" repeated the marchioness, in articulate and mournful recapitulation of the parting counsels of St. Florentin.

"Do not trifle with us !" cried Léonie, fetching the little girl from Madelon's arms, and placing it at its mother's feet. "The time is ebbing away in irresolution, — the hour of horror approaches, — speak for us, Aglaë ! Implore your mother to take pity upon our unprotected situation, and comply with the exigencies of this fatal period. Implore her to —"

"*Whom* did they bid me marry ?" muttered the marchioness, in evident and horrible incoherence of mind ; "a Valazy — a murderer ? — and why not ? — These black robes would fitly grace the bridal of the widow of St. Florentin ! Let us away to church ! — Where is my father, — the marquis, — the Bishop of Evreux ? — Dearest St. Florentin ! see you not that we are all waiting ?" —

"God of Heaven ! — her mind is utterly bewildered !"

cried Camille, pacing the room in agony. "What can be done?"

"She is incapable of deciding!" faltered Léonie, in the deepest distress. "Yet, surely, in such a desperate crisis, the friends who love her may venture to act in her behalf. — Camille, Camille! not a moment remains for deliberation! — Fetch hither Thomain, the mayor of Isques! — The old man is our friend, and will overlook all difficulties. Even in her present afflicting condition, be generous, — save her from destruction, — accord to her the protection of your name!"

Camille cast a look of agonised irresolution on the beautiful creature who sat with her eyes fixed vacantly upon them, — a ghastly smile on her lips, and her hand wandering with the wildness of imbecility among the dishevelled tresses of her hair.

"Can I — dare I — in her present state, actuate her conduct in so solemn and sacred an instance?"

"Fear not! — On my own head be all the responsibility," cried Mademoiselle de Mirepoix. — "Fetch hither the mayor of Isques. On your return, all shall be in readiness for the ceremony!"

CHAPTER VIII.

J'ai tout fait, tout osé, pour t'aimer pour te plaire,
J'ai trahi mon pays, ma conscience, mon roi,
Cependant, vois le prix, ingrate, que j'en reçois

CORNEILLE'S *Ariane*.

No need for the liberal donation with which Valazy attempted to accelerate the diligence of the mayor of Isques; who, as in most villages of France, was merely a respectable farmer of the parish, qualified to affix his own signature and decipher those of other people, on the printed circulars of the neighbouring *commune* of Samer. At the instance of his young neighbour of Manoir, he cheerfully

quitted his agricultural labours, and hastened with the necessary certificates to the farm; and an hour had not elapsed from the decision of Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, when the old man was standing with Valazy beside a table in the salon of Manoir, upon which Léonie had deposited writing materials for their use. There was no person yet present but Madelon; whose faculties had been almost paralysed by the arrival of Maximilien's letter; and who, under the stupifying influence of the marvellous events passing around her, appeared to act with the mechanical impulses of an automaton. She advanced, however, towards her son, and placed her cold hand in his with a gesture of affectionate approval, — incapable of uttering a syllable!

In a few minutes, the door of the inner apartment was thrown open by the wife of Tonton, who had assumed her *costume-de-fête*; and Mademoiselle de Mirepoix entered, leading in the marchioness, — whose countenance appeared to Camille in a great measure divested of the ghastly hue it had worn at his departure. Her dress had been carefully arranged by the aid of the trembling Léonie; but though her demeanour was grave and mournful even to a degree of appalling solemnity, it was evident that the arguments and persuasions of her cousin had succeeded in restoring her to perfect consciousness of her situation, and obtaining her acquiescence in the projects of Valazy. For a moment, she paused abruptly on her entrance, as if to survey the preparations, and explain to herself the presence of Thomain, as well as of Tonton and his wife, who were to act as witnesses to the civil contract. Then, dropping the arm of her conductress, she advanced deliberately, and with a firm step, towards Camille. — There was a profound silence in the room when she deliberately placed her hand in his!

With what a thrill of mingled emotions did he receive the pledge! — Yet he dared not press it within his own. — He dared not gaze steadfastly on the lovely figure of Emiline as she placed herself by his side! — He was apprehensive that the most trifling assiduity on his part might again disorder her feelings; and strove to make the

customary responses to the demands of the mayor, and fulfil the necessary forms of the ceremony, with an air of business-like indifference, such as might tend to re-assure her misgivings. He felt how fearfully misplaced would be the slightest inference of tenderness at such a moment !

Emiline, to the surprise of every person present, executed the requisite formalities of the contract with the grave earnestness of a mind nerved to desperation. Having thrown one shuddering glance round the chamber, as if in expectation that some supernatural agency would interfere in arraignment of such a profanation, she signed her name with a steady hand, *Emiline—veuve St. Florentin—née Nanelles*, beneath that of Camille Valazy—of her husband ; who immediately took the pen from her unconscious grasp without the utterance of a single word—without a single demonstration of satisfaction in the accomplishment of the event !

Leonic, alone retaining the least presence of mind or power of sympathising in the interest of the moment, tendered her hand affectionately to Valazy, as if in consideration of his feelings, and in the ordinary form of congratulation ; but while he was whispering an entreaty to Mademoiselle de Mirepoix to remove her cousin to the silence and solitude of her own chamber, little Aglaé, followed by her attendant, rushed into the room, proclaiming that a body of armed horsemen were galloping down the avenue.

" They are come ! — The miscreant is at hand ! " cried Camille, seizing his arms, and rushing into the court-yard, followed by Thomain and Bénédict, and attempting to discover among the men who had dismounted at the gate the abhorred person of his kinsman.

" Nationals," muttered Thomain, in a tone of respect as the soldiers approached — " but not of this district."

" What is your business, *camarades* ? " said Camille, somewhat re-assured by the absence of his cousin.

" Softly ! " replied the sergeant of the troop, who now advanced to the head of the party. " We must know you better before we admit that fraternisation. — Your name *citoyen* ? "

" Valazy."

"All's right, then! — advance!" cried he, beckoning forward his men. "We arrest you, *citoyen*, on the special warrant of the Convention, as convicted of conspiracy against the French Republic. Be pleased to follow us to Samer without delay."

"I have this moment returned from Arras," said Camille, inadvertently; "and claim the respite of an hour for repose, and the arrangement of my affairs."

"From Arras? — right again! We were advised to look for our prisoner in the goodly fellowship of Lebon. An hour? — too long by three tedious quarters! Ten minutes will suffice to gather a few assignats into your purse — and then — *en route*! — If your own horse is blown, take that of one of my troopers, who will remain here in guard of this old crenelated rat-hole."

"Stay!" said Thomain, interposing with an air of authority, considerably enhanced by his accidental investiture in his official habit. "Be it known to you, *citoyens cavaliers*, that no legal arrest can take place here unless the warrant be countersigned by the municipal officer of this district. Now as I have the honour to preside over the mairie of Isques —"

"You may recreate your official eyes, if it suit their leisure, with a perusal of our warrant; which, being an especial document from the hand of Robespierre, would acquire little validity from such an endorsement as that of the mayor of ten measures of Calaisian pasture-land, shared by the proprietors of thrice as many mud-hovels."

"It is indeed in form!" said Thomain, after deliberately affixing his spectacles to his nose, and examining the credentials of the sergeant. "But what do I see! — It bears the name of Maximilien — not of *Camille Valazy*! — What error is here?"

"It is doubtless designed for the person of my kinsman, whom every hour we expect here from Paris."

"That is a plea of evasion which has been tolerably hackneyed of late, and may hardly serve your turn," said the man, indignant from a suspicion that some subterfuge was about to be practised on him. "We are commissioned

by the Hôtel de Ville of Montreuil sur Mer to arrest the person of one Valazy ;—who, having escaped detection by passing surreptitiously through that town on his road from Paris to Arras, is known to have sheltered himself in a farm called Manoir, on the confines of the Condette and Samer districts. We find you here, *citoyen*, avowing your name and recent arrival from Arras. Without further parley, we arrest you as our prisoner."

"At your peril!" cried Camille, satisfied that by some unaccountable vicissitude, probably through the envious hatred of Robespierre, which had already conveyed Danton and others of his associates to the guillotine, Maximilien had been denounced to the Convention. "This warrant refers to another individual; and I warn you against any violation of the person of a republican citizen."

As he spoke, he tendered his *carte civique* for their inspection. "Is your identity recognisable at the mairie of Samer?" said the man, doggedly, "and will you consent to accompany us thither?"

"Willingly. But in abandoning your post here, remember you forfeit all chance of the arrest of your legitimate prisoner."

"Your friend speaks fairly, Mr. Mayor," cried the sergeant to old Thomain, who had hobbled across the courtyard to satisfy the apprehensions of his neighbour, Madame Valazy. "But he should know that we wild-geese usually fly *en enfleude*. I have a detachment posted yonder in the rear of the house, and another at the head of the avenue, whom I will leave in occupation during my absence. It would be hard if we should miss fire in both directions;" and taking his *briquet* from his pocket, he proceeded to light his cigar, while Thomain expostulated apart with Camille.

"Words were wasted upon men as brave but as impenetrable as their own sabres. Best accompany them without dispute to Samer, where you can be officially identified and released," said the prudent old man.

"And leave my family exposed to the tumult and terror of Maximilien Valazy's arrival?"

“ He must be a *gaillard* of some importance, who has earned a scrape of Robespierre’s own quill, and the abhorrence of his own near relatives ! ” exclaimed the mayor. “ But fear not, my young friend ! — *I* will undertake the defence of the garrison till your return.”

Wearied and wayworn, irritated by every new contrariety, and fevered by the struggle of contending passions, Camille, on this re-assurance, hastened his departure and that of his most unwelcome guests. Instead of being preceded by the national dragoons into the little town of Samer, he himself galloped at the head of the cortège into the square of the market-place.

Here, however, equally to his surprise and vexation, he encountered further delay, and fresh annoyances. — Night was coming on. The mighty magistracy of the town of Samer had retired from its cares of state to the *otium cum dignitate* of *sirop de groseille* and the Boston table ; and the only reply vouchsafed to the eager Valazy by the porter of the clerk of the secretary of the *adjoint* of the mayor of the *commune*, was an order of detention for the night in the crowded prison of the town, till the mystery of Maximilien’s arrest should be cleared up by magisterial cross-examination ! — It was in vain to remonstrate — to storm — to rage. — *There* were the military minions of the law, to enforce the capricious mandates of official despotism ; — and *there* was the old convent of St. Marie de Boulogne, which still uplifts its dingy walls beside the parish church of Samer, but which, during the reign of terror, revolutionary sacrilege converted into a receptacle for suspected persons. In spite of his eager resistance, he was deposited in its cheerless thralldom ; and thus, for the second time, by an accidental chain of mischances, did Camille Valazy become a prisoner, without the incurrance of any legal charge, and at a moment imparting tenfold importance to his loss of freedom.

With the fiercest impatience, and the bitterest repentance of his credulity in following the counsels of Thomain, he paced the miserable chamber apportioned as his place of rest. The food which was forced into his presence as a plea for sub-official extortion was removed

untasted, while he urged his entreaties to the surly turnkey, (a being strictly fulfilling Mercier's definition of *un verrou animal*) — that at the earliest possible hour of the morning such news from Manoir as might have reached the town, should be imparted to him without delay.

"Out on thy grumbling!" cried the brute, pointing to the wretched bed destined for his accommodation. "What wouldst have? — Thou hast supped like an emperor, and 'twill be thy own fault if thy sleep match not with thy meal. — As to thy Manoir — *peste!* e'en wait the worshipful pleasure of thy betters and mine." And the coarse and insolent janitor jarred the door in his face, and left him for the night to the safe keeping of bolt and staple, and the dreariness of solitude.

In spite of his struggling emotions, of apprehensions only the more dreadful from their vagueness, the weariness of exhausted nature prevailed. Like a wretch bowed down by the torments of impalement, he slept! — Flinging himself on the bed, in the vestments of which for two days and nights he had not been disencumbered, his harassed spirit sank into such unquiet and feverish slumbers, as impart little refreshment to the suffering frame. — A thousand horrible visions floated in his brain, connected with the scenes in which he had recently been an actor. The clay-cold face of Euphrosine appeared to bend over his own, and freeze his very heart's blood with ghastly endearments, till he was moved to fly from her loathsome pursuit. — But his steps failed him! — Wherever he turned, the ground was slippery with blood, and his flight arrested by a countless multitude of revolutionary victims, meeting him and surrounding him on every side. — Headless and gory figures of the Lyonesse victims, — Vendéens, — Bordelais, — Parisians, — appeared to rise and greet him in horrible succession.

Another and more dreadful picture shaped itself before his eyes. He seemed to stand arrayed in the national uniform, in that field of blood in the neighbourhood of Nantes where *five hundred children*, the orphans of murdered royalists, were condemned by Carrier to be shot! — At every discharge, troops of fairy figures were levelled with

the earth ; and the mutilated infants, turning their imploring hands and dying faces towards him, exhibited the lovely countenances of little Aglaë and her lost sister !

Again, he fancied himself standing amid the tufts of gorse upon the hills above Rosamel ;—again he looked down, in the delusion of sleep, upon the valley of the storm ; again the peaked roofs of Manoir appeared to rise above the lofty groves in which they were embedded. And suddenly, a stream of vivid lightning descended on the house ; while bursting flames, like those of the Château de Florinethun, gushed upwards from the contact. He laboured to fly to the assistance of its beloved inmates ; but his feet were rooted to the spot ! He heard their voices calling on his name ;—he beheld them struggling with the inroads of the fiery element,—till he cried aloud in his agony, and broke the spell of his agonising slumbers !

The morning sun was bright upon him, and a clamour in the market-place below the walls of the convent, assured him that the citizens were already astir. Yet no one came to appease his anxiety and tranquillise the stirring emotions of his heart. At length it occurred to him to pile together the few wretched fragments of furniture in the room, and reach the upper panes of a grated window, the remainder of which had been walled up, to restrict the curiosity of the prisoners. He had the satisfaction of obtaining, through this narrow and perplexing aperture, a partial view of the square in which, immediately opposite to the convent, stood the paltry Hôtel de Ville of Samer. Not a house was yet open for the day — not an inhabitant stirring : but a glance sufficed to satisfy him that the tumult he had heard arose from the arrival of the detachment of dragoons from Manoir. Clustered round the steps leading to the hotel were several soldiers, whom he recognised as having formed part of his own escort, in company with others wearing a similar uniform, whose horses were tied to the iron props round the fountain in the centre of the square serving to support the market booths ; and who, with much mirth and prodigious demonstration and gesture, were

busied in relating some wonderful narrative for the amusement of their comrades. The sergeant who had so strongly insisted on his arrest, was standing, pipe in mouth, waiting the opening of the official tribunal ; with the morning sun glittering brightly on the ornaments of his schakos, and shining through the light fumes which circled in misty volumes round his head. Occasionally, in the course of their recital, the soldiers pointed to some dark object—something wrapt in a military cloak, which lay upon the upper step ; and once when, on turning towards this mysterious thing, the veteran perceived a straggling dog or two attracted towards it, and inquisitively snuffing to discover its contents, he stamped with the heel of his boot so angrily on the pavement, that the ringing of his brass accoutrements reached even the ears of Valazy.

It was a moment of terrible suspense ; more especially when the doors of the Hôtel de Ville being leisurely unbarred by the concierge, the soldiers lifted the heavy object upon their shoulders and bore it into the hall. It was evidently a human body—the stiffened relic of some victim from Manoir !

Still—still—no sound was audible in the vast corridor of the prison ; and as Camille strained his ears to discover some faint token of approaching footsteps, he could detect nothing but the trickling of the fountain in the market-place, and the occasional jingling of the snaffle chains of the chargers, as they tossed their heads in impatience of the prolonged absence of their masters.

After a pause of about twenty minutes, the dragoons rushed impetuously forth from the doors of the Hôtel de Ville, laughing and shouting in tumultuous exultation,—mounted their horses, and galloped from the square ; and Camille, with an involuntary shudder, observed that one of the men flung over the crupper of his saddle, with an air of disgust, the cloak which had been disencumbered in the tribunal within, of its mysterious burden.

Still no person came near him ; and he felt as if some artery must burst, in his efforts to attract by shouts the attendance of his tardy gaoler. At one moment, he resolved to descend from his tantalising post, in order to re-

examine the bolts of his apartment; but having soon remounted to his giddy eminence and resumed his reconnaissance, he was struck by the sight of two figures issuing from the official gateway, of which he had not happened to observe the entrance.

His joy burst into benedictions, as he recognised the familiar figures of Bénédict and the mayor of Isques !

CHAPTER IX.

Yet after all this love, sir,
 All this profession of his faith, when daily
 And hourly I expected the blest priest,
 He left me like a dream ! as all this story
 Had never been — nor thought of — why, I know not !
 Nor whither he is gone — nor why departed
 Can any tongue inform me.

Love's Pilgrimage. — FLETCHER.

To the impatience of the prisoner, an age appeared to intervene between his first glance of recognition as his friends crossed the market place towards the convent, and his detection of the heavy tramp of footsteps ascending the stair leading to his chamber. As the key grated harshly in its rusty lock, Camille fancied he could discern in the voice of Thomain, who was conversing with the familiarity of old acquaintance with his gaoler, a species of self-contented garrulity, a certain chuckle of triumph, which could not be the harbinger of evil. In an instant, the door was flung open; and the rustic magistrate of Isques advanced towards him with outstretched arms, while Bénédict danced and capered round his master.

“Gone to his account, — dead, — butchered in cold blood !” cried the faithful retainer of the Duc de Navelles, while Thomain was still tuning his voice for an explanation. — “My good old master is avenged ! — My poor dear young mistress is avenged ! — the burning of Florincethun, with its stable of two hundred stalls (seldom empty), is avenged ! — The nation has wiped out the blot of ——”

"The *citoyen* your kinsman is no more!" interrupted Thomain, who felt that the details of the narrative belonged more particularly to himself.

"But your lady?" cried Camille, addressing himself to Bénéoit, and regardless of the presence of the *guichetier*.

"The *citoyenne*, your worthy mother, is in excellent health," again interrupted the Mayor of Isques. "Though the ladies at Manoir suffered considerably from the affright of having a company of strange dragoons quartered upon them as guests, yet my presence, and their confidence in my power and will to defend them through all emergencies ——"

"For the love of Heaven, be brief!" exclaimed Camille. "Remember, my dear good Thomain, I am ignorant of all that has proceeded during my confinement."

"In the first place, then," said Thomain, seating himself angular-wise upon the solitary wooden chair afforded by the cell — "you had no sooner departed, than all the female inhabitants of Manoir set upon me with the most violent vociferation and gesticulation, to upbraid me with having persuaded you to desert the farm at such a moment ——"

"And with just cause, — as was proved by my detention in this accursed place ——"

"So that instead of being able to confabulate with the corporal of the detachment of the Montreuil garrison, touching the best mode to be adopted in the capture and disposal of their expected prisoner, or advise them regarding the localities of the farm, seeing that no person remained there as *locum tenens*, or ——"

"To the point, — to the point!"

"Excepting Tonton the herdsman, whose intellect ——"

"At what hour did the wretch make his appearance?" interrupted Valazy, addressing himself in despair to Bénéoit, who was enacting behind Thomain's back a pantomime of impatience at his prolixity.

"Please you, sir, Marmin and I were in the stable about nine o'clock, looking to the brown mare, which had made her appearance in so wretched a plight from Arras in the morning, when *crac*! — what should we hear but

the report of fire-arms in the avenue. — Helter-skelter went the dragoons posted on the bridge ; and off I set with your honour's pistols in one hand, and my stable lantern in another. — But before I could reach the upper gate of the avenue, several straggling shots were fired ; and when I came up with the Nationals, I saw a calèche standing on the turn from the road to the avenue, surrounded by troopers. In a minute, my lantern was snatched from my hand, and held down to the face of a man who had been dragged from the carriage, and was lying on the bank, — *dead* I thought, when the light gleamed over his livid visage. — But no ! — *sacré matin !* — I had the happiness to hear him give several groans of agony. For, as you surely guess, sir, the wounded man was no other than the ruffianly murderer of my noble master."

" Maximilien Valazy, then, is no more ? "

" Dead as Marlbrook ! — The soldiers fell a disputing for the honour of who had aimed the fatal blow. For it was a sabre-cut which reached the villain ; and as a price was set on his head by the Convention — "

" If taken alive. — The warrant was assuredly to arrest, not to slay the caitiff ? "

" But the caitiff," proceeded Thomain, taking up the narrative, " refused to obey the warrant, — resisted, — drew arms in his own defence ; and so was dragged from the carriage, and sacrificed to his obstinacy. His servants, after backing him in the onset, fled under cover of the darkness, and were not judged by the national troops worthy of pursuit in a strange country."

" And so the soldiers bivouacked under the great elm for the night, after crowning their labours with a hearty carouse ; — and were off hither to Samer before daylight, on their way back to their garrison. I hoped they would leave the carcase of the murderer behind them ; — that, as he had dealt with my gracious master the duke, so might I deal with himself. But the soldiers had their reward to win of the municipality — "

" And I my *procès verbal* to deliver ! " observed Thomain, with official solemnity. " Whereupon the town council having referred to the mandate received yesterda

from Paris, and discovered especial instructions that any proceedings begun or attempted by the traitor Maximilien Valazy against any person or persons bearing his own name, within the liberties of their *commune*, should be forthwith abandoned and discharged, my worshipful colleague yonder conceiving that this favourable provisory clause must apply to the inhabitants of Manoir, began to repent that, in his love of leisure last night, he had caused you to be so unhandsomely detained; and so, issued an order for your enlargement."

"Am I then free?" — cried Camille.

"As the wind, my dear master," cried Bénéoit, rubbing his hands. "The brown mare waits for you below."

"Softly!" said the concierge — vexed to be so quickly defrauded of a promising inmate; "there are dues to be paid, besides an extra supper, which might have served——"

"There!" — cried Camille, impatiently flinging him his purse as he bounded down the filthy stone stairs of the convent; and in a moment, he was perilling his own neck and that of his favourite mare, by proceeding at full speed down the broken and slippery *pavé* of the suburbs; leaving Thomain and Bénéoit to follow at leisure, after the refreshment of a bottle of *ordinaire* shared between them at the renowned hotel of the *Brochet-d'or*.

As Valazy approached the avenue of Manoir, and beheld its gables glittering under the morning sun, involuntarily he relaxed his speed. The carriage which had conveyed the assassin of Florinethun on his malicious errand still lay overturned against the dike fencing the avenue. The loose dust bore the impression of a confusion of trampling horsemen; and further on, upon the short grass of the embankment, was a large dark spot matting the verdure, which Valazy with a shudder of abhorrence justly attributed to the mortal effusion of his detested kinsman! — An involuntary association recalled to recollection his old grey-headed uncle of Grand Moulin, with a feeling of satisfaction that he should have been spared the sorrow of witnessing such a termination to the career of such a son!

Far other thoughts, and many a grievous presentiment

curdled his blood, as he proceeded along the avenue with as much deliberation as if no especial interest hung on the moment of his arrival. He was about to behold her again, — to look again on Emilie, — to find her relieved by the death of her only enemy from all further terrors for her destiny, — to behold in her the arbiter of his future fate — *his wife!* — Every pulse throbbed with emotion — but of a character any thing but pleasurable.

“I must not, I cannot remain here!” he involuntarily exclaimed, as he obtained a more distinct view of the windows on approaching the house. “I will secure every arrangement for their departure to England, — and then, away to the army! — My friend, young Buonaparte, has obtained the command of the artillery in the south, — I will join him as a volunteer. Let *who* will and *what* will influence the helm of state, the duty of every Frenchman points to the resistance of its foreign foes. — Yes! — for both our sakes — I must fly, — I must leave her. That which has chanced, places an irremovable bar between us for evermore.”

At the door of Manoir, he was met by his mother, who bestowed an unsought blessing on his head with a degree of mournful solemnity that accorded ill with the sympathy he anticipated on his triumphant return; and instead of summoning the attendance of Tonton, he tied his horse to the railing of the little court, and accompanied her silently into the saloon.

The first person he remarked was little Aglaë, arranging flowers in an osier basket, who uttered a cry of delight on perceiving her favourite Camille; when lifting the child from the floor, he bestowed a thousand caresses upon her, in return for this involuntary token of affection. But on turning towards the sofa, the habitual seat of the marchioness, he saw that Mademoiselle de Mirepoix who occupied her place, made no effort to approach or address him.

“Pardon me, mademoiselle!” said he, at length, “I was unprepared to find your demeanour thus changed towards me — I was unprepared to find you thus abruptly resentful of my intrusion.”

.

"Camille!" cried Léonie, bursting into tears, "is this accusation generous or just?"

"The unfortunate occurrence of yesterday ——"

"Has wrought no change in *my* sentiments towards you, unless by converting the regard of an obliged friend into the affection of a kinswoman!" said Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, frankly tendering him her hand. "*I*—*I* who have witnessed your silent struggles,—your generous self-renouncement,—your more than chivalrous devotion,—can best appreciate the nobleness of your conduct; and could my influence prevail over the obstinate prejudices of my cousin, the affection which has hazarded peril and privation for her sake would be rewarded on her part with the grateful affection of a wife.—But alas! ——"

At that instant the marchioness, having recognised from her window the horse usually ridden by Camille, burst into the room; her looks haggard,—her dress hanging in wild confusion,—her hair unbound.—Léonie and Camille were speechless from consternation, as she walked deliberately towards them, and fixed full upon Valazy the glance of her deep blue eyes, in which every human sentiment of loathing and contempt appeared concentrated.

"And the plotter is come again!"—whispered she, in an accent of distraction. "Thou, who hast practised against my peace with months and years of patient malignity,—watched me from day to day, to forward the accomplishment of thy treacherous ends,—prithce note thy triumph and rejoice!—*I* was bereft of every thing,—all earthly possessions had been wrested from me.—*Fortune*,—*fame*,—*distinction*,—my filial pride,—the happiness of a wife,—the solace of a mother's love.—But *I* had still one treasure left.—*Yes!* *I* had still one jewel in my casket,—and of that thou hast robbed me ——"

"Do not listen to her," interposed Léonie, colouring deeply. "Leave the room, Valazy,—she *rares!*"

"*I* do *not!*—he *shall* listen!"—cried Emiline, throwing back her hair from her face. "*I* am rational as yourself;—nay, crafty as the son of Madelon Valazy!"

"Of what have *I* robbed you, Emiline?" inquired

Camille in a subdued voice, anxious to soothe a frenzy which he believed to be a relapse of her former infirmity.

"*Of my fidelity to the dead!*" — said the marchioness, in the same appalling whisper as before. — "Had I died yesterday, I had gone down to my grave the devoted widow of St. Florentin! — What am I now? — the degraded wife of the lowest and most despised of human beings!"

"When will our calamities end?" cried Camille. "Léonie — Léonie — speak to her! — expostulate with this infatuation.

"Nay! wherefore shouldst *thou* complain?" said the marchioness. "Hast thou not compassed thine ends? — Have not all thy cold — deliberate — artful plots succeeded? — Vassal of my father's house! — has not the daughter of Navelles become the abject wife of a Valazy?"

With the energy of desperation, Camille now advanced towards the marchioness; and taking her firmly by the arm, conducted her to the sofa, and seated her by the side of the agitated Mademoiselle de Mirepoix.

"Emiline!" said he, "notwithstanding all this intemperance, you are capable of understanding my words. I command you to listen to me before we part for ever."

Startled by his resolute demeanour, the frantic sufferer sat as still as death.

"I little thought," he resumed, in a less determined tone, "that the time would come when I should be compelled in self-defence, — in justification of my own motives, — to recapitulate my benefits to you and yours; — to set forth the devotion of my whole life to your service, — to remind you of all I have suffered, all I have renounced for your sake. In our infancy, Emiline, we were playmates. — The same bosom nursed us into life, — the same scenes witnessed our progress towards maturity. I loved you then with a tenderness which, however exclusive, was free from presumption; for I knew not yet by what an impassable barrier the child Emiline was divided from the adoration of the child Camille! — You grew into womanhood, — and then it was I became conscious of the humiliations of my birth! — You were wedded to an

honourable and adoring husband ; but little did you dream how long, how fervently, the growth of *my* passion had forestalled his own !”

He paused for breath ; and the colour of Léonie de Mirepoix went and came as she observed with how powerful a struggle of emotions he was contending.

“ You became a mother !— You presided over the household happiness of another. — Yet still, at an humble distance, I loved you, — noted the developement of your loveliness, — your excellence. — Dangers lurked around your prosperity, — I was the first to warn and to defend you. — A terrible destiny loured over the aristocracy of France ; — and the ignoble foster-brother of the Marchioness de St. Florentin thenceforward renounced all care for his personal prosperity, — all interest in the duties of his station, — that he might devote himself to her protection in the hour of peril. — Nay, more, — with a dissimulation hateful to his feelings, he humiliated himself to dwell in the enemy’s camp, that he might acquire the power to serve her with a surer influence. — In defiance of the claims of official duty, I perilled my life in attempting the preservation of him who was dear to Emiline. — I ventured it again and again, — and oh ! with what fond enthusiasm, — to rescue *herself*, from destruction. — I abandoned the cause of my native land, — the duties of manhood. — To be her defender and keeper in a land of strangers, I closed my ears against the cry of my struggling fellow-countrymen, — and in that only do I repent my error. My soul has long rebelled against this treachery to its better impulses. — But it is not yet too late ! — A baptism of blood shall still wash out the stain.”

For a moment he drew up his fine figure to its utmost height, and a consolatory hope appeared to expand within his bosom. But very quickly did his voice resume its former tone of subdued and pathetic tenderness ; and his eyes their powerful earnestness, as leaning against the table near which she was seated, he fixed their impassioned gaze on Emiline.

“ During the tedious hours of sickness I watched over

you with the self-denying and patient love of a brother:—nor from my cradle till this hour have I felt—breathed—thought—acted—save with reference to the object of my infatuated passion.—And finally—and may the God who hears me attest the sincerity of my honest dealing,—finally, Emiline!—when an accursed marriage appeared to threaten you with ties abhorrent to your heart, I presumed, as the only means of evasion, to offer you the security of a nominal union with myself;—knowing and feeling with the bitterest and most degrading consciousness, that my hand would be accepted with secret sentiments of contempt and disgust.—Yet this sacrifice of my pride,—great as it was to a generous spirit,—you have construed into an act of the basest selfishness!”

The marchioness, who during the progress of Valazy's expostulations had gradually assumed greater composure of demeanour, now hid her face on the shoulder of Léonie de Mirepoix, and sobbed aloud. But without noticing this change in the character of her emotions, he made a desperate effort over his feelings, and resumed his appeal.

“And now—madam—I am about to bid you farewell;—a long—a last farewell, my own adored Emiline!—Even had your interpretation been juster and kinder, I had judged it necessary to tear myself from your companionship under the circumstances which have enwoven themselves around us. But now,—after your cruel accusations,—there exists not that spot of earth on which we could breathe together in peace!—It is for me therefore to quit your presence; and I go where my exertions may wipe out the blot of my plebeian descent, and where the grave assumes its most alluring aspect.”

“Camille,—Camille!” cried Léonie, with streaming eyes, “this is mere petulance!—You have no right to agitate us thus.”

But Valazy was unconscious of her interruption; his gaze, his heart, his whole soul were centred upon Emiline.—“I could have wished,” said he, still pointedly addressing her, “I could have wished that your parting words

had been gentler, — your parting looks less coldly bent upon me ! — But it matters not ! — the whole truth is now revealed to me. — I feel that no excess of personal sacrifice, no intensity of devotedness, can ever win me the recompense of your regard. Now, at the eleventh hour, I discover that my life has been lavished in vain ! — But it matters not. — My fruitless tenderness shall importune you no more ! ”

“ No ! do not leave Manoir ! ” — exclaimed Madame de St. Florentin. “ Remember the claims of your mother ! ”

“ Forget not those her fidelity has wrought upon your *own* affection, or her old age will indeed be desolate ! — It were ungrateful to visit upon *her* blameless existence the presumption of her son. — But I loiter ! — Léonie, my indulgent friend, — all things are prepared to conduct you in safety with your cousin to the protection of your brother. — Heaven’s blessings be upon you both ! — Emiline ! — may you find truer and worthier friends when I shall be at rest ! ”

He knelt down before her, — kissed the hem of her garments, — took her clasped and unresisting hands between his own ; — then, rising in speechless emotion, quitted the chamber. His mother, ignorant of all that had been passing, and supposing him on the point of quitting home for some short absence, received as he passed his parting embraces without surprise ; and followed him to the gate to see him mount his horse, with little Aglaë who had run to inquire the cause of his going away. — Camille motioned to her to lift the child into his arms for a farewell kiss.

Unable to utter one syllable in reply to the little girl’s affectionate interrogations, he strained her to his heart, — bent over her for a moment in bitter and choking emotion, — then leaping into his saddle, galloped along the avenue, without turning one regretful look towards the mansion which he had quitted — *never to return !*

* * * * *

For days — for weeks — the broken-hearted Emiline, relying on the fervency of a passion so long and faithfully demonstrated, refused all faith in the predictions of Made-

moiselle de Mirepoix that they should see him no more. It soon appeared that on quitting them, Camille sought out the retreat of the curé of Isques ; and placing in his hands the ample funds provided for their emigration, obtained his promise to accompany them to England, nor quit them till they obtained the guardianship of the Chevalier de Mirepoix or the young Duc de Navelles. He suggested that Bénédict should accompany his lady ; and recommended to Blaisel the interests of the whole party, in terms which left no doubt on the mind of the curé as to his intentions of permanent alienation.

Still, nothing could prevail on Madame de St. Florentin to believe that the noble heart of Valazy was lost to her for ever. It was so new to Emiline to find herself an object of less than exclusive devotion, — to find her steps unnoted by the eye of adoration, — her words untasted by the partial ear of a lover, — that her spirit drooped into utter despondency. — While Camille remained by her side, she had never been fully conscious of the desolateness of her social position ; — while *his* tender solitudes guarded her round with the observance and deference due to some supernatural being, she had scarcely recognised herself as the survivor of all her kindred saving an expatriated and infirm brother, — as a person supposed to be numbered with the dead, — as the helpless and destitute mother of a still more helpless child. — Even Madelon appeared to love her less, as the froward cause of banishment to her only son ; — while Léonie did not attempt to disguise her disapproval of the graceless construction which Emiline had been tempted to affix on the conduct and motives of one whom she so truly loved and honoured as Camille Valazy. Her only softening impulse towards her obdurate cousin arose from secret conviction that the conduct of the marchioness arose less from mistrust and indignation, than from the self-reproaches of her own heart for its unacknowledged predilection in favour of her ignoble husband.

“ She loves him ! ” said Léonie, in her solitary musings among the pastures of the Lianne. “ In spite of her pride, — of her prejudices, — of herself, — she loves him. Every precept in which she has been nurtured, every

impulse of her nature, rebels against such an avowal ; and Emiline has not energy to cast off the paltry restrictions of her birth, and rise superior to the mean suggestions of vanity. Yet had he deigned to abide with patience the turning of the tide, poor Camille might not long have found cause to murmur against her ingratitude."

She was shortly confirmed in these opinions by a strange and sudden resolution declared by the marchioness.—“ Let us hasten to England, Léonie !” said she. “ I am wretched here.— The sight of these familiar objects eats into my heart. Every hope is lost of the recovery of my precious child ; and it was *his* wish,—*his* suggestion that we should quit the country. I am bound to fulfil his injunctions.”

“ Alas !” whispered Léonie to Madame Valazy, while hurrying their preparations for departure, “ could our dear Camille but hear her thus submissively acknowledge his authority, surely he would not despair of softening the claim into the tenderness of a wife !”

“ Camille is for ever lost to her and me !” was the conclusive reply of his afflicted mother. And her augury was only too strictly fulfilled.

CHAPTER X.

He appeared with the laurel of victory in one hand, and the olive of peace in the other. — WALTER SCOTT.

YEARS passed away. — The rainbow foretold by the prophetic eye of the curé of Isques now irradiated the horizon of France. — A new era had dawned upon her fortunes !

The French republic might be said to have attained its utmost prosperity when, at the commencement of July, on the first year of the new century, the First Consul arrived at the palace of the Tuileries, in all the triumphant glory of the recent victory of Marengo ! This crowning event of the celebrated campaign of the thirty days had not

only completed the conquest of Lombardy and Piedmont, but, like a new Actium, afforded a pretext for closing the temple of Janus, and for the pretensions of a new Augustus.

Buonaparte is said to have achieved upon the field of Marengo the conquest of France as well as that of Italy. The citizens of Paris, — the most susceptible of all cities to the intoxications of military triumph, — were excited by the intelligence of this unexpected and signal success of the army of Italy, into a degree of personal affection for their victorious consul such as he had never yet experienced. Suspected by many of favouring the return of the exiled family of the Bourbons, with whom he was known to have entered into a species of negotiation through the medium of the fascinating Duchesse de Guiche; by others, and with far more probability, accused of aiming at the re-establishment of the monarchy in his own person, — Buonaparte was regarded with a degree of mistrust which nothing but the boldness of his measures, and the dazzling brilliancy of his military career, could have enabled him to confront. For a time, “MARENGO!” was an answer to every murmur and every accusation.

Having quitted Milan ten days after a victory in which the only drawback was the loss of the young and distinguished Désaix, the progress of the Chief Consul from the Alps to the Tuileries resembled an ovation rather than an ordinary journey. Followed by the officers of his staff, and having triumphed over the still existing difficulties and dangers of Mont Cénis, his haste was arrested at Lyons by a deputation of the chief inhabitants of the city, (at the head of which was a grey-haired man named Dacquín, the Nestor of the municipality,) entreating him to lay the first stone of the rebuilding of the Place Bellecour; whose princely edifices had been condemned to demolition in 1793, by the malignant hand of Collet d’Herbois, and which had been finally devastated during the bombardment of General Doppet.

“Trusting with sanguine confidence,” said the organ of the wealthy Lyonnese, “that this unfortunate city may entertain a hope of rising from its ruins under the auspices of the victorious consulate of France, commerce looks for

its best protection to that powerful hand which has planted the eagles of the Republic beneath the shadow of the Apennines! — Lyons regards it as a favourable omen that the hand which organised the triumph of Marengo will lay the foundation of a monument of her renovated prosperity."

An office so flattering having been graciously accepted on the part of the triumphant consul, the worthy magistrate ventured to express the satisfaction experienced by his fellow-citizens, in their discovery that a former member of their community, the distinguished Mainville, the SOLDIER OF LYONS, should have participated in the glories of General Buonaparte on the sands of Egypt, as well as upon the plains of Italy; and in spite of the gravity of the audience of the Hôtel des Célestins, General Mainville could no longer refrain from throwing himself into the arms of the old man who had loved him like a father, and who now recognised him with such eager exultation. While the populace, with acclamations and cries of triumph, insisted that the victor of Marengo should exhibit himself to their eager gaze from the balcony of the chamber, a few hurried explanations occurred between these ancient associates.

"Even had not the good Bauveau apprised me of your sudden apparition at his *comptoir*, I should have known you," cried the old man. "In spite of the fervid bronze of an oriental sun, and of your change of name and vocation. Ah! my dear Camille! you did right to wean me from my manufactory! — Your prescience of the misfortunes of this fated city saved me from ruin. — During Kellerman's siege, every stone was rased to the ground, and I consider myself your debtor for all I rescued from the wreck."

"It is nearly ten years since we parted," said Camille. "I scarcely dare inquire after your family."

"All well! — too obscure for the guillotine! But while you have been gathering laurels, my dear general, my daughter who was wont to regard you with so much partiality, has united herself to my successor at the factory, and you have lost your chance. Wait, however, a few years, and I have a pretty little grandchild to supply her

place, and endow with old Michel Dacquin's dollars one of the most eminent heroes of the republic. — After the toils of war, you must return to shelter your old age in the home of your youth."

Mainville shook his head.

"By your change of name, perhaps, you are no longer a candidate for matrimony?"

"To avoid the unpleasing recollections connected with that of Max Valazy, I have assumed the name of a small estate I possess near Meaux."

"During the days of terror we heard that you had united yourself with ——"

Camille started, and would have turned away.

"With the daughter of my poor old numskull of a correspondent, the mercer Delplanque," continued Dacquin.

"Both father and child perished on the scaffold of their native city!" was his evasive reply. "But see, — the Consul re-enters!"

Dacquin and his black-robed procession were now compelled to retire; and on the following night, Buonaparte and his staff passed on to Dijon, having devoted the morning to the solemn ceremony organised by the Lyonnese magistracy.

Honours of every description awaited his arrival. Groups of well-born and beautiful women, crowned with flowers, assumed the appearance of a mythological mask or the triumph of some Olympic victor. No sooner was his arrival at the palace of the consulate known in Paris, than the gardens of the Tuileries, — the adjoining quays, — even the streets commanding a view of its lofty roofs, — were filled by an excited multitude, welcoming with shouts of exultation the hero of Marengo. The city was illuminated by unanimous resolution; and all parties and classes were united by the enthusiasm of the moment! The armistice recently concluded with Austria suspended the anxieties even of those whose nearest and dearest were serving under the banners of the Republic in the army of Italy.

Previous to the Consul's departure for the army, the

palace of the Tuileries presented the germ of that future court, whose imperial magnificence was destined to amaze the inexperience of more legitimate sovereigns. The gracious and graceful Joséphine had re-established in her own circle those forms of French politeness, accounted sinful during the sanguinary disorganisation of the Revolution ; and had received, in return, the tokens of personal homage formerly bestowed upon the queens of France. On quitting their audience of the Consul, the republican ministers were introduced to her presence ; delighted, after the tedium of official labour, to unbend their minds in the society of the accomplished protectress of the new order.

Under her auspices, Paris resumed something of that gay and brilliant aspect which has procured for her the name of the *guinguette de l'univers*. The horrible anniversaries of sanguinary triumph were abolished ; and in their stead, the masked balls of the opera, the *concerts spirituels*, the favourite *promenades* of Longchamps, all the cherished scenes of Parisian festivity, mirth, elegance, and coquetry, were re-established. The Tuileries and Malmaison afforded an example of graceful hospitality rivalling the former brilliancy of Versailles ; while St. Cloud, rising from its ruins under the patronage of the First Consul, promised to renew the rural fêtes of the Petit Trianon.

Madame Buonaparte, whose conciliating address had won to her party some of the fiercest nobles of the Faubourg St. Germain, already hailed the ancient names of France gracing her *salon* ; and in the sisters of Napoleon, and the dawning maturity of her charming daughter, Hortense, its circle possessed attractions such as few royal houses could tender for the captivation of their courtiers. Nor had imperial etiquette yet excluded from the coteries of the château a crowd of eminent men, to whose triumphs in the career of art, science, or literature, no patent of nobility was necessary ; and who surrounded the car of the victorious consul with the star-crowned visions of glory described by Schiller as heralding the progress of genius !

Already General Mainville had received the commands

of the Consul to present himself in that fascinating circle, to which the names of Berthollet, Chaptal, David, Talleyrand, Isabey, Millin, Coupigny, imparted the strongest interest in his eyes. But an appointment was soon vouchsafed him which for the present absorbed his faculties. It was decided in council, that on the 14th of July,—that memorable anniversary which commemorated at once the establishment of the French republic, the taking of the Bastille, and the federation of the Champ de Mars,—the banners conquered at Marengo should be presented to the consulate, and the sabres of honour decreed to Lannes, Victor, Watrin, Gardenne, and Murat, tendered in return; while the foundation of the Quai Desaix was to afford to the memory of the departed hero a monument conducive at once to the advantage of his fellow-citizens and his own immortality.—Napoleon had selected as the bearer of the standards of Marengo the brave and popular Lannes,—afterwards Duc de Montebello; but fearing that the soldierly frankness of his address might not fulfil the expectations of the assembly, he appointed his Lyonnese favourite to the office of haranguing the soldiers of the Invalides, previous to the distribution of the medals appropriated by election to five of their number.

Who shall describe the enthusiasm—the exaltation of spirit pervading all classes of society in Paris, on that memorable occasion!—It was a beaming day in July, bright as the glory it was destined to commemorate; and defying the ardours of the sunshine, the whole population of the city poured itself into the vast area of the Champ de Mars;—gratulation and triumph on every lip, and the hope of a permanent peace irradiating every countenance. As the consular procession approached the church of the Invalides, still designated as the Temple of Mars, the eye of Camille seemed to rest on a condensed mass of rejoicing human beings; and the inspiration derived from so touching a spectacle, imparted to his oration a tone of animated eloquence such as its pre-appointed periods might not have attained.

With the plausibility of office, Lucien Buonaparte, as mi-

nister of the interior, commenced the ceremony of the day by an harangue comparing the actual position of France with the anarchy of the Directory ; and his discourse was heard with the chilling silence due to the occasion. The brilliant assembly which filled the tribunes and galleries of the church, uniting all that was beautiful and illustrious in the Republic, plainly demonstrated its consciousness of the factitious emptiness of these vague declarations. But when Lannes, — bronzed by the exposure of successive campaigns and dignified solely by a character of martial pride, — advanced towards the magistracy of the realm to lay at their feet trophies of the valour of its sons, no rounded periods flowed from his iron lips, no artful conciliation tempered the tone of his address ! But the hearts of the auditors beat as if a trumpet had spoken in their ears ; and while he girded to his side the sword of honour offered by the Republic as the reward of his exploits, the silence of deep emotion pervaded the temple.

It was now the turn of Camille to present himself to the notice of the Assembly ; and, for a moment, his spirit felt rebuked by the necessity of claiming its attention after a man whose victories endowed him with rights upon the hearts and minds of his fellow-citizens. But no sooner did he stand confronted with the consuls, and read on the expressive countenance of the victor of Marengo an assurance of perfect confidence in his acquittal of the duty delegated to his hands, than the hero of Lyons felt a new sense of enthusiasm invigorate his frame. While hundreds were pointing him out as the soldier of fortune who had crowned himself with laurels at Bassano and Arcola, and attained his present rank by his triumphant sally from the walls of Mantua, Camille appeared to feel himself alone with his illustrious friend, and to direct to *him* only the expression of those elevated emotions and enthusiastic sentiments, which had united their efforts on the field of victory.

The fervour of General Mainville's noble oration caused the hearts of its hearers to thrill with new sentiments of admiration towards that extraordinary man ; who, in the commemoration of this, the most remarkable of his vic-

tories, was studious to conceal his triumph behind the ostensible names of Berthier, Kellerman, and Massena.— During the distribution of the medals, exclamations of transport and gestures of sympathy animated the vast assemblage that seemed to render the venerable church instinct with life and joy. But when the Chief Consul himself, rising from his seat, addressed in the names of his silent colleagues a few heart-stirring words to the representatives of the republican armies, the multitude appeared transfixed by some preternatural charm. Every look was turned towards him—every soul appeared inspired by the presentiment of his future greatness!—And lo! while his last accents lingered in the ears of his breathless auditors, while they still seemed to listen to the charge addressed to Lannes and his brave companions, “Go back to the camp; and bid your soldiers send us peace, or the remaining banners of the enemy!”—the solemn tones of the organ rolled through the dome; and the impressive ceremonies of the day were terminated by a hymn of thanksgiving, in which the harmonies of Méhul were breathed as by common inspiration.

On quitting the church, a still more affecting scene presented itself. The consular guard, arriving in all the display of its march from the glorious field of Marengo, was paraded before Napoleon amid the deafening shouts of the multitude, and the waving of unnumbered ensigns of triumph. But while the eyes of the multitude in the Champ de Mars were engrossed by the aspect of those hardy veterans whose scorched visages spoke of the ardent sun of an Italian summer, and their dilapidated arms of the still fiercer encounter of an Austrian army, those of General Mainville were riveted on two lovely children, who, in company with Mademoiselle Beauharnais, occupied the carriage of Joséphine;—girls of some ten or twelve years of age,—one of whom recalled to his mind a vanished dream of his youth, by her extraordinary resemblance to the daughter of the Duc de Navelles. Riding towards Duroc, whose attention was directed to the same quarter by his well-known attachment for the lovely Hortense, Camille hastily inquired the name of this interest-

"It is Mademoiselle Beauharnais!" — replied the young soldier, in answer rather to the suggestions of his own heart than to the demand of Mainville.

"No, no! — the children?"

"The children! — Nay, you must address yourself to la grandmaman Campan, who has the charge of these doves of the consular aviary; — *my* fancy rests elsewhere."

Still more unsuccessful were his inquiries of Fouché, who impatiently shook off his interruption. — "Yonder brats? — Bah! — some Creole kindred of Joséphine's. — We have consignments of them in every West India fleet, with cages of green paroquets, ourang-outangs, and cases of Ratafia de Martinique."

An opportunity of better information soon presented itself. On the following night, a fête in the gardens of Neuilly, then the abode of Talleyrand, collected together the brilliant ranks of the incipient court. Though neither of the consuls graced this splendid festival with their presence, the graceful and ingratiating Joséphine was its tutelary goddess.

The gorgeous saloon in which she sat reclining on a low divan, was one of those creations of the decorative art peculiar to fairy tales and *fermiers généraux*. — Yet Joséphine was not unworthy to be the priestess of the shrine. She had, it is true, attained that period of life "*où l'on n'est plus jolie, mais où l'on est encore belle.*" But nature appeared to have wrought a miracle in favour of the bride of the miraculous Napoleon.

It has been said that Buonaparte was pre-organised as the only person capable of repairing the political ravages of the Revolution, and restoring the limits of social order. It may be observed, with equal truth, that Joséphine was equally qualified to create anew those graces and charms of society, then morally extinguished. For the first time since the delirious rule of Robespierre, the gracious address of "Madame" was heard in the circles of Malmaison; the altars of religion were first reconstructed for the exercise of the religious duties of the wife of the Consul; — and every *minor* embellishment of the feminine character was cherished under her aus-

pices. The homage by which her influence could be best propitiated was the gift of some rare exotic; and the favourite for whom she first attempted to obtain the favour of the Consul, was the preceptress of her children.

While Mainville approached the divan, he perceived that Joséphine was engaged in conversation with a woman of advanced age; in whose high-bred self-possession and rich but unostentatious elegance of attire, he recognised an air of the *vieille-cour* which, combined with the deference attaching the wife of the First Consul so long to her *fauteuil*, announced some personage of more distinction than the generality of the lovely women who graced the saloons of Neuilly, — the Talliens, Recamiers, and Grandts of the republican era. As he silently contrasted the formal air of the stranger with the graceful ease of Joséphine, whose simple robes of white muslin and hair twisted into a Grecian contour with a single row of pearls, formed her sole ornament, he was startled by the eloquent thanks of the wife of the victor of Marengo, for the justice he had rendered to France and its hero, in his discourse at the Invalides.

“I am thus prompt in tendering my acknowledgments,” continued Joséphine, with the captivating smile which won so many hearts to her cause, “because aware that it is about to lose its value in the superior approbation of my friend, Madame Montesson, who requests me to present you to her acquaintance.”

General Mainville received the introduction which now took place, with a profound bow; and, after a few casual compliments on both sides, attempted to repay the flatteries with which his Egyptian exploits were recalled by Joséphine to the remembrance of Madame Montesson, by an assurance that his future reminiscences of the fête of the 14th of July would be chiefly embellished by the loveliness of her youthful protégées.

“I thank you for my Hortense!” replied Joséphine, with much emotion. “May her destinies equal those excellencies of her character which are beyond the reach of human vicissitude!”

"Previous to my departure for Italy," replied Mainville, somewhat embarrassed by this misconception, "I had occasion to recognise the graces of Mademoiselle Beauharnais. The children to whom I allude ——"

"The general speaks of your little girls," observed Madame Montesson.

"Of Emiline and Stéphanie? — True! I had obtained a day's relaxation for them from Madame Campan."

"Of *Emiline*? — Pardon me, madam," cried Mainville, "if I presume to ask by what name I must for the future distinguish my inquiries after your lovely little kinswoman?"

"Hush!" said Joséphine, speaking in a lower tone, and looking carefully round her. "We never designate her otherwise than as Emiline."

"I am answered!" replied the general, with respect. "But my questions, madam, were caused by stronger motives than ordinary curiosity."

"It is not impossible, my dear Madame Buonaparte," said Madame Montesson, taking a pinch of snuff with a most unperturbed countenance, "that General Mainville might afford you a clue to the details you have so long desired, relative to the parentage of Emiline?"

Joséphine shook her head, mistrustfully. "You, general," said she, in a confidential whisper, "can make allowances for the rigorous caution with which the Consul is forced to surround his domestic relations. Shunning like yourself all contact with the regicides who still haunt our circles like abhorred and ghastly spectres, it becomes his duty as it is his interest to avoid all show of partiality towards ancient nobles and returned emigrants. My Emiline is the orphan of royalist parents, martyrs to the Revolution. I received her as a sacred deposit in the midst of its scenes of desolation. Though without express certainty of her birth, I have every reason to believe her the last survivor of the families of ——"

"Navelles and St. Florentin!" — exclaimed Camille, in a tone of triumph instantly repressed by his companions.

"Her mother is said to have perished in the conflagration of the château at Florinethun, one of the finest estates

which fell into the grasp of the nation," said Madame Montesson, with another deliberate pinch.

"And of which General Mainville, if I mistake not, became the purchaser?" — observed Madame Buonaparte. "But you are agitated?" she continued, startled by his evident emotion.

"Only by sympathy in the joy of the wife of my illustrious friend, on learning that her protection has preserved a child to rejoice the heart of a *living* parent,—of the tenderest of mothers!"

"How?" cried Joséphine, unconsciously elevating her voice in her turn. "The mother of my sweet Emiline —"

"Lives, madam—and in all the bitterness of sorrow for the loss of her child."

"In emigration, sir?"—listlessly inquired Madame Montesson.

"The First Consul deigned to bestow some tokens of favour on the widow of her brother, the Duc de Navailles, with whom she resides in poverty and obscurity at Milan. — After the evacuation of Genoa, the duchess and her sister demanded an audience to acknowledge the protection they received from —" he hesitated.

"Speak on, sir!" said Madame Buonaparte, with a smile. "Do you fear to tell me that this fair emigrant was fortunate in obtaining the notice of —"

"A traitress taken in the act!" said a well-known voice by her side; and while a familiar hand was placed upon her shoulder, she turned round to meet the ironical smile of the First Consul, — whose arrival had been lost to the little group, in the interest of their eager discussion.

CHAPTER XI.

C'étoit un beau spectacle! Il parcourait la terre,
 Avec ses vétérans — nation militaire
 Dont il savait les noms;
 Les rois tuyaient, — n'étoient pas de sa taille, —
 Et vainqueur il allait par les champs de bataille
 Glanant tous leurs canons! VICTOR HUGO.

ABOUT ten days after this explanation, an official courier dismounted at the convent of the Annunziata, at Genoa, bearing a letter from the hand of Joséphine to the widow of a French nobleman, resident within its walls.

Madame de St. Florentin had now been five years settled in Italy. Her sojourn in England had not been of long continuance. In quitting Manoir, she exacted from Léonie a promise of secrecy relative to the unfortunate incident which had placed an eternal bar between herself and her former benefactor; and by the false position in which she thus thought proper to place herself, Emiline was, on her arrival in England, exposed to the addresses of the Chevalier de Mirepoix who, for many years, had cherished towards his lovely cousin an attachment which, if less capable of personal sacrifices than that of the unfortunate Valazy, was scarcely less fervent.

It is impossible to conceive a situation more trying to a delicate mind, than that in which Emiline found herself in London. Valazy had realised, in contemplation of their journey, a considerable fund for their maintenance, and placed it at the disposal of Blaisel, their guide and protector. But Emiline was in a position which taught her the indelicacy of accepting further favours at his hands.

"Camille is no longer my foster-brother," she would exclaim to Mademoiselle de Mirepoix, "that tie is merged in a holier union. — He now lives in my heart as a friend I have injured, — a husband I have insulted. Let me work — beg — starve, — rather than exhaust the last remaining sources of his independence. Monsieur le curé must remit the deposit back to Madame Valazy!"

Fortunately for the self-resenting Emiline, she was not compelled to either of these desperate alternatives. The letters she had addressed to her brother, whose feeble health compelled him to reside in Italy, were answered with as much promptitude as circumstances would allow ; and the reply of the Duc de Navelles to his sister's appeal, was more affectionate and consolatory than his prolonged estrangement from his family led her to expect. Infirm and slightly deformed in person, Amédée de Navelles possessed that peculiarity of humour, which, from Scarron upwards, has been noticed as characteristic of genius cribbed and cabined in the frame of a cripple.—Notoriously disaffected towards the ancient monarchy of France, the character of his mind was such as to induce him to look forward to the establishment of a better order of things in his native country, rather than sit moaning over outrages avenged by the nation in the retributive execution of Robespierre and his accomplices.

" You must come to *me*, my dear sister," wrote Amédée de Navelles from his retreat at Genoa, " if you deign to accept the shelter of my miserable roof.—For, alas ! the *cul-de-jatte* is as little locomotive as when you used to win the race upon him on the terrace at Navelles ; nor can he gather breath enough to support his frail and maimed existence among the fogs of the Thames. An interval of peace enables you to visit the harbour of this city of palaces, where we will devise plans for our future establishment."

With a species of sullen desperation, the marchioness achieved the preparations for their departure ; and still guarded by the paternal care of the good Blaisel, they traversed the blue waves of the Mediterranean, and anchored in safety under the impressive quays of Genoa.

In addition to the affectionate greeting tendered to them by the Duc de Navelles, satisfactory news awaited them on their arrival. The duke had received, in bills of exchange from a banker of the city, the half-yearly revenue of the estates of Florincthun ; with an unsigned letter, which stated that they had been recently purchased of the

national commissioners by a friend of the family for the benefit of the widow and child who, it was understood, were about to seek his protection.

"With whom are you sufficiently imprudent to maintain relations of intercourse in the capital, dearest Emiline?" inquired the duke, as he placed at her disposal the sum expedited for her use. "This mysterious *Monsieur Friport* must be tolerably high in your confidence, since all the intelligence I had been previously enabled to gather of you, consisted in a statement of yours and Léonic's extinction on the fatal day of outrage which deprived me of my father."

"I have neither friend nor correspondent in Paris," replied the marchioness, blushing deeply in the dread of her brother's further interrogations. "I am only interested in recollecting that the death of the villain Max Valazy has redeemed us from our sole personal enemy, and that the execution of his colleague Robespierre has secured the population of France from its common assassin! Who more survives in Paris of foes or friends, I ask not. Secure, dear Amédée, in *your* protection, I have nothing further to desire."

Yet it soon became evident to her brother,—who had wisely dropped his title for the modest designation of Monsieur de Navelles,—that Emiline had not only much to desire, but that the events and circumstances with which these emotions were connected, had been in a great measure concealed from his knowledge. Finding the desolate grandeur of Genoa unpropitious to the restoration of her spirits, he prevailed upon her to return with him to his previous residence at Milan; where, though he studiously evaded the notice of the Austrian court, a social circle of the highest nobility of Lombardy welcomed his return. To these, Monsieur de Navelles was endeared by his cheerful patience under the most dispiriting bodily infirmities, as well as by the epigrammatic gaiety with which he philosophised on the loss of wealth, title, and personal ease; while others of the exiled nobility of France wearied the ears of their hosts by parading over their vanished glories, and

denouncing vengeance on the usurpers of their rights. Ignorant of the horrible details of his father's death, Amédée would reply with an ironical smile, "*Que voulez vous ?—France has encountered the destiny of nations ; — glory, — prosperity, — luxury, — enervation, — misgovernment, — anarchy, — desolation !—Let us see what sort of phœnix will rise from her funeral pile !*"

At times his friends were apprehensive that the freedom with which he expressed his political opinions might expose him to personal mischance. "No, no !" said he pointing to his crutch, "Æsop is a privileged railer. — The imperial Sauerkrauters know that the *cul-de-jatte* is good for nothing but a *shreckroegel* ; — not strong enough for the field, not knave enough for the cabinet. — When these *dilettante* generals of the French Directory make their appearance in Milan, with their military and diplomatic staff of auctioneers and appraisers, — poets and painters, — I can but tender to their love of the fine arts my portfolio of caricatures ; and then, like his ducal highness at Modena, offer to redeem the pledge of allegiance with a six-livre piece."

Though far advanced in the fatal disorder which marked him for an early grave, nothing could exceed the satirical animation with which he hailed the baseness of the stiff-necked Milanese princes in hastening the flight of the Archduke Ferdinand, that they might divest themselves without reproof or suspicion of the cherished paraphernalia of their haughty state, — their titles, — equipage, — and heraldic bearings, — to welcome the entrance of the directorial troops.

"By the time Salicetti instals himself in the palace," said Amédée, with a sneer rather humorous than bitter, "we shall find that all these princes of the Noah dynasty have dismissed their flowing perukes for the shaggy untrimness of a Brutus-à-la-Condorcet ; or — who knows ? — perhaps for a greasy *bonnet rouge* ! — Our financiers will exchange diamond buckles for shoe-strings, and fancy themselves transformed into Rowlands and Neckers !"

Both his sister and her friend, notwithstanding these sarcasms, were not slow to perceive that the wasting frame

of the invalid was deeply agitated by tidings of the approach and successes of the republican army. "Pardieu ! they fight like devils !" was his ejaculation on learning their first victory at Monte Notte ; and when the battle of Lodi introduced the name of a new Alexander to the trumpet of Fame, a flush of triumph gleamed upon his cheek. Even Emiline, though sincerely in his confidence, and Blaisel the confessor of his opinions, were by no means certain of the part he would adopt on the occupation of the city by his countrymen, when they witnessed the struggle by which he strove to distinguish his sympathy in the exploits of the veterans of France from his abhorrence of the regicides of the Revolution. But, alas ! the determination of his opinions was diverted by the arrest of a higher authority than that of king or kaiser. These agitations fatally accelerated the progress of a disease which had latently consumed the powers of life ; and in order to append to the façade of his abode the festive tapestries which the city had commanded to give an air of public rejoicing to the entry of the French troops, they were compelled to remove the funeral hangings of Amédée de Navelles !

On the day previous to his release, the noble emigrant, whose movements and opinions were always peculiar, suddenly marked his consciousness of approaching dissolution, by a proposal of marriage to his beautiful cousin !

"My silence on this delicate topic, dear Léonie," said he, extending his hand towards her, "has not proceeded from any ignorance of the family contract binding us from our cradles to each other. Had the *ancien régime* of Versailles upheld its dilapidated fabric, and compelled me to take my place among the logs in velvet and embroidery stationed like automata round the throne, believe me, dearest cousin, the *cul-de-jatte* would never have exposed you to the shame of becoming Duchess of Navelles. I would have told you, in honest truth, that your choice lay between a convent and the society of a wretch branded by the stepmother-reprobation of nature ! — that although the buoyancy of youth sometimes enabled him to chirrup in the sunshine, increasing infirmities would surely render

his premature age a peevish and louring winter to your patience ; — that the cripple would love you too tenderly to bear the spectacle of your disgust ; — too susceptibly, to endure the suspicion of your preference for another ; — and then, pointing to the cloister as a happy alternative, have eagerly counselled your rejection of my hand."

More distressed by the sight of his increasing feebleness than by these strange declarations, Léonie implored him to desist from his wild project.

" But now, Léonie, now, a dying man, I do not implore, — I demand the fulfilment of our contract ! You shall not be defrauded of such rights as the re-organisation of public affairs may at some future time bestow. Deign to become my widow, and the sister of our dear Emiline ; and do not refuse, in return, an occasional tear to the memory of the *cul-de-jatte*."

It was rather to appease the agitation with which he resented her refusal, than from any inclination towards the scheme, that Mademoiselle de Mirepoix acceded to the entreaties of Amédée and Emiline ; and the ceremony was performed by Blaisel at the altar of a neighbouring church, whither, with some difficulty, the invalid was transported by the aid of his intimate friend Prince Rezatelli, and his servant, the faithful Bénédict. Two days afterwards, the youthful duchess — a bride and widow — was attempting to soothe the afflictions of the weeping Emiline on the removal of the last representative of her house, the last friend of her heart, to his lonely grave ; — while the acclamations of the populace filling the street, — the blaze of a universal illumination, — and the increasing report of discharges of fireworks, — proclaimed the triumphal entry of the republican army.

Yet neither at that moment nor any subsequent period of the varying fortunes of the army of Italy, could Emiline be persuaded to evince the smallest interest in the success of the French troops.

" What is it to me," she cried, " that the allies of the exterminators of my family should hold at their girdle the keys of the Alps ; — that the gates of Mantua should open at their fiat ; — that Lombardy and Tuscany

— the Queen of the Adriatic or the Ligurian city of palaces—should bow to the standard of the republic?—I recognise no banner as that of France, but one which bears for its ensign the lily of the Bourbons ! ”

Absorbed in the bitterness of retrospection, Emiline devoted her time to the education of her little girl ; and while Madame de Navelles, after the respect of a year’s seclusion paid to the memory of the generous Amédée, permitted herself to seek the recreations fitting her age in those circles of Milanese society which had been frequented by the duke during his lifetime, Emiline occupied herself in acts of devotion and charity, which every day more and more estranged her from the conventions of the world.

The formation of the Cisalpine republic insured them a brief respite from the horrors of war ; and Buonaparte having been rejoined by his bride, established himself for the summer months at the palace of Montebello, where by the splendour of his establishment, and the brilliant hospitalities of Joséphine, he satisfied the vanity and frivolity of the subjugated Lombards with something of the character of a court. Between the treaties of Leoben and Campo Formio, the heroic victors of Lodi and Arcola, indulging in diversions such as might have besecmed the romantic career of Tasso’s knights, occupied themselves with festive triumphs, with excursions on the northern lakes, and picturesque diversions among the enchanted gardens of the Borromean islands.

Re-assured by the general tranquillity, Léonie succeeded in persuading her sister to quit the city during the summer heats, and accept the hospitality of the mother of one of Amédée’s favourite friends, Princess Rezatelli, who possessed a *villeggiatura* between Berlasina and Como. But though the cheek of the invalid grew fresher and her eye brighter when exposed to the breezes of the mountains, no smile irradiated the one, or dimpled the other. She was in fact pining away with that canker of the heart — a grief which we dare not communicate, and cannot assuage. Long hours of self-communing, of recurrence to those days when the unspoken passion of Camille declared itself in a thousand hourly and trivial manifestations, a thou-

sand broken words of irrepressible emotion, were the secret indulgences with which she engraved his image on her heart in characters of fire.

And he, who thus fervently occupied her thoughts, her prayers, her conjectures, *was her husband* ; — her own by a sacred tie of his eager seeking ; — yet divided from her by a barrier as repulsive and insurmountable as the icy mountains within whose withering shadow no living thing can abide !

Within a few weeks of her residence at the Villa Rezatelli, an incident occurred destined to augment with a thousand vague anxieties the sufferings of the penitent Emiline.

CHAPTER XII.

Che san quì tante pellegrine spade ?

PETRARCA.

THE court of Montebello was luxuriating in one of those delicious intervals, when the corn-fields are left untrampled by the fierce hoofs of the cohort ; — when the vineyard fence serves to rebut the intrusion of the stragglers from some goatherd's flock, rather than afford a mask for the aim of an enemy ; — when the summer's sky wears an untroubled atmosphere unsullied by the stifling vapours, — unjarred by the startling voice of the engines of war !

One evening, as the prince, Léonie, and her cousin, were sauntering home on horseback, beneath the lengthening shadows of the chestnut trees, they heard angry voices contending rather in the sharp thin vociferation of French bitterness, than in the varying and full-toned cadences of the *patois* of the Milanese ; and on a bending of the road, perceived little Aglaë and her attendant with a few retainers of the prince grouped round the old mule devoted to her service ; while a half frantic woman clung to the crimson pillion on which the child was

seated, and a party of French hussars, whom they recognised as part of the legion quartered at the adjoining village of Pietra Ferzi, were attempting to drag her away. Bénéoit, who acted as a species of dragoman between his countrymen and the people of Prince Rezatelli, ran towards his lady on the approach of the riding party, to explain the commotion.

“Ma'amselle Aglaë was amusing herself with her waiting-maid Maturina, in straying through the enclosure, when they had been attacked by a strange woman, either mad or intoxicated, or both, apparently some sutler-follower of the French camp. But Maturina's screeching soon brought to her aid some of those ranting dragoons always maundering about the country; and they have taken the woman into custody, and are carrying her off to quarters for justice.—Flogging or hanging will mend her principles against a new campaign.”

By this time, they reached the scene of the affray. But though they could distinctly hear the piercing cries of the marauder, they could see nothing of her face. The Madras kerchief which had been knotted round her head was torn away, and her loose dishevelled tresses hanging wildly round her person, gave her the air of a fury.

“Plead for me, child!” said she, extricating one arm from her fierce guardians, to extend it towards the sobbing Aglaë. “Command them to release me, or my blood will be upon your young head!—I was bred a vassal of your father's land.—The same air nourished us,—the same green hills sheltered our dwelling. Plead for the bondswoman of your father's house!”

A thrill of horror curdled the blood of Emiline, as she recognised that voice. “Flavie,—unfortunate woman,—into what degradation hast thou fallen?” cried the marchioness, with a shudder.

“And through whom?”—cried the struggling prisoner, throwing back the hair from a face scarred and disfigured by exposure and hardened with the fierceness of effrontery; “through whom?—*Through thee*. When thou wert a poor, despised, proscribed being, thy drivelling lover sued at the feet of Flavie for aid to thee and thine. Thy kins-

man, Mirepoix, was rescued from the regeneration at La Force, through my interposition ; and while thou wert flying from the smoking ruins of Florinethun, Flavie, on her pedestal of pride, received the worship of all good republicans, who acknowledged the divinity of the Goddess of Reason—ha ! ha ! ha ! They may scourge me—they may brand me—they may hang me, — but my feet have been kissed by their grovelling idolatry !”

“ I never injured you, Flavie,” faltered Emiline, horror-struck by her virulence.

“ Not injure me ? — not hurl me from my eminence ? — not plunge the iron into my soul ? — I loved him so — amid all the folly and all the sin of my career, I so loved Maximilien that I would have perilled body and soul, — nay ! I *did* peril body and soul, in the madness of my tenderness. And what was my reward ? — He bad me serve *thy* beck as an hircling, — and I did so ! — He bad me betray the trust of those whose bread I had eaten, — and I did so ! — And then, while I still cleaved to him with a fidelity surpassing the faith of a wife, — I who had shared his time of need, — who had slaved for him, — starved for him, — I, who had deserted the old age of my parents, and the good-will of the village, to be the drudge of his adversity, — I was expelled from beneath his roof in the day of his triumph, — *for thee* ! — He told me, he was about to bring thee home as his wife. He told me he loved thee with ferocious and revengeful passion ; and bad me seek some other protector, — some other refuge for my infamy.”

The distracted woman writhed as she spoke, uttering a species of howl which chilled the heart of every person present.

“ But I would not go ! — No ! I clung to him, — till he smote me, — till he drove me forth like an outcast ! — But it was all thy doing.”

“ Oh ! no, no !” cried Léonie ; “ my cousin would have spurned his suit and him !”

“ But she would not have done as I did ! — She would not have feasted on such glorious revenge as the betrayed Flavie !” — She drew in her breath with a hissing inspir-

ation, as if recoiling from the sound of the horrible narration she was impelled to utter. "I crept stealthily — secretly — unsuspectedly, to the den of Robespierre; — and told him how the friend of his bosom had plotted against him. — I gave him written proofs of the treachery of the proud man who was on his way to Picardy to bring home his noble bride — *his* bride! — ha! ha! ha! — And so the warrant was issued, — and the bloodhounds cheered upon his track, — and they slaughtered the gallant bridegroom even in his wooing! — Ha! ha! ha! — And then I was happy!" Her head sank upon her bosom. "And so because I was *too* happy, and laughed *too* loudly (for no one was permitted to laugh in Paris when Robespierre was pope), they sent me into the convent at the Saltpêtrière, and I had stripes enough to cure any mirth less vehement than mine."

"You perceive that this poor woman is in a state of derangement," said Prince Rezatelli, humanely to the soldiers. "Release her, and I will see her placed in the lunatic hospital at Milan."

"Hospital! — bah! — the black-hole will be cure enough," cried the corporal: "we all know that la Mère Andy gets into her tantrums after seeing the bottom of the *Rosalia* flask. But we will take her to quarters for her sentence."

"Save me!" cried Flavie, clinging to the skirts of Emeline's dress.

"Justice, justice!" clamoured the peasants.

"Away with her to quarters," cried the corporal of the troop; "we are responsible to our commandant."

And in spite of the entreaties of Emeline the shrieking and bewildered criminal was hurried over the fields by her enraged guides. They saw the uniforms of the French soldiers glancing among the tender green of the flag-like leaves of maize, long after the execrations of their struggling prisoner became indistinct in the distance.

"Let us go round by the Camminata, and meet them at Pietra Ferzi," cried Léonie; "our evidence and intercessions may do something in her favour."

And without waiting the concurrence of the prince, they rode towards the village, at the distance of about a league from Rezatelli. On approaching its first straggling hovels, — before which groups of hussars, with their arms folded and their pipes in full activity, were listening to the romances of some more experienced moustache of the tribe, who had fought with Montcalm and heard the bitter cry in the marshes of the Massachusetts, — the prince ventured to point out the unfitness of such a scene for female intrusion; more especially when, on reaching the market-place and its *alberghetto*, the pipes were removed from the mouths of the politicians crowded round the table under its protruding trellice, for the utterance of coarse by-words of wonder at the beauty of the strange horsewomen. Two sentries planted at the door of a mansion somewhat more dignified than the rest, announced the head-quarters of Colonel Mainville.

“Stay!” said the prince, as they prepared to dismount; “before you attempt this rash interview, I forewarn you that I cannot be your companion in presence of an officer of the French republic. The name of Rezatelli is of too permanent an inscription in the archives of Lombardy, to be involved in the acceptance of any concession from such a quarter.”

“Right, right,” cried Léonie, somewhat vexed by his lukewarm inaction in their behalf; “our countrymen — unless strangely altered — will be far more accessible to *our* representation, than to the preambles of all the descendants of all the Longobardi.”

Again Rezatelli attempted to dissuade them; but the cousins disappeared beneath the archway of the Caserina; and he could devise no better resource for his mortification, than to lead their horses to the shade of the lime-trees ornamenting the centre of the piazza; graced with a dilapidated fountain, of which the principal triton appeared to be blowing a post-horn in a mizzling rain.

The sentry having pointed out the corps-de-garde where application must be made for admittance to the commandant, Eniline and Léonie, soon found themselves standing in a dirty antechamber, at the central table of

which, an aide-de-camp was employed in busy transcription ; while the walls, scrawled over in all colours and all possible caligraphic varieties of German, Italian, and French, —bore evidence to the fortunes of war,—the declension of the house of Hapsburg, and the ascendancy of its conquerors. Accepting the bench politely tendered by the military secretary, Emiline profited by his advice to write on a slip of paper the object of her mission to Colonel Mainville, whom he stated to be engaged at dinner in the adjoining chamber, with one of the aide-de-camps of General Buonaparte, who had just arrived at Pietra Ferzi on a special mission. As the young officer left the door of the antechamber ajar, on entering to deliver their petition for an audience, the marchioness and her companion had the full advantage of the discussion which ensued.

Two French ladies, — emigrants, — requesting the favour of a few minutes' conversation ? ” — said a strange voice. “ Bah ! tell them, my dear Canouville, that between soup and bouilli is not the moment for district business ; and that an emigrant is a parricide,—a felon without the pale of the law of politeness.”

“ Nay,” cried another voice, “ Mainville must not refuse us the rare advantage of female society. Bring these fair petitioners in to pledge us in a glass of Chambertin, and we will drown their disabilities at the bottom of the goblet.”

“ With your leave, monsieur le general,” said young Canouville, “ these ladies are of respectable degree.”

“ Bah ! so was my grandmother.”

“ The hostess of a *gargote* at Amiens ! ” muttered the young aide-de-camp. “ They came hither under the protection of our neighbour Prince Rezatelli, and are waiting in the anteroom,” he continued, aloud ; and a scuffle of chairs ensued, as if the officers were rising from table.

“ Not a step, gentlemen ! ” cried Colonel Mainville. “ As it is not in *my* power to receive the visit of these ladies, I must beg you to resume your seats. Canouville, inform madame, — inform the writer of this note,—that it is impossible for me to enter into communication with a French emigrant with such courteousness as I could wish.

Any request addressed to me *in writing* will be better attended to."

But on returning to his post, the young officer found, that the enemy had quitted the field. At the first accent of that well-known voice, a faint cry had broken from the lips of Emiline! Her first impulse was to rush from the spot into the court-yard, precipitately followed by the astonished Léonie, who had heard nothing in the words of Mainville, except the hoarse tone and ungracious sentiments of some revolutionary captain.

"Has any thing unpleasant occurred to madame?" inquired Rezatelli, as he lifted her upon her horse to return to the villa. "Surely no one has dared——"

"Hush! hush!" cried Madame de Navelles. "Emiline has resolved to address this personage in writing. Let us hasten home, that no further time may be lost."

On arriving at the villa, the marchioness, however conscious of the urgency of Flavie's position, could not collect her faculties sufficiently either to effect her purpose or declare the truth to her sister-in-law; but Léonie, seizing the pen, had the presence of mind to make out a clear statement of the case, and despatch it by an active messenger to Pietra Ferzi. During the interval of his absence, Madame de St. Florentin neither uttered a connected sentence nor stirred from the chair into which she had thrown herself. When the measured trot of their emissary's horse was heard upon the chaussée, her breath was suspended by the interest of the moment.

"Be not thus agitated, dearest," whispered Léonie. "They cannot refuse you so poor a boon as this wretched woman's pardon." Alas! the anxieties of the trembling expectant were engrossed by any thing rather than the destinies of the luckless Flavie Audicourt! —

The note was now brought in—placed in the hands of Emiline—opened.—It was written in a strange hand.

"Read it!" faltered the marchioness, sinking back despondingly in her chair.

"The colonel commandant of the district of Pietra Ferzi has the honour to acquaint the guests of Prince Re-

zatelli, that their request is granted. The woman Audi-court, in consideration of her mental infirmity, will be forthwith transferred to the Ambrosian Ospidaletto of the Cisalpine Republic."

"Victoria!" cried Léonie, dropping the letter. "We might have spared ourselves that tiresome journey."

"Very respectful,—very satisfactory!"—rejoined the stately Lombard magnat. "This fellow appears conscious of what is due to the inmates of the Palazzo Rezatelli."

Emiline withdrew from her companions without sharing the exultation of the one, or the gratified vanity of the other. Her first movement, after bolting herself in her chamber, was to fall on her knees and return thanks to Heaven that Camille still lived—lived in the honour and distinction of successful soldier-ship; her next, to throw herself upon her couch, and weep with that unrestrained vehemence which is at once the solace and nutriment of affliction.

She had heard his voice—his very breathing.—She had been within the compass of a few steps from his presence. She might have rushed to his arms, and shed on his bosom those tears which now burst so lavishly from the depths of her heart! And what had restrained her?—*Shame!*—the dread of well-merited rejection,—the consciousness of unpardonable injury.—The Soldier of Lyons was now devoted to his country; his mind engrossed by the influence of patriotism, as it had formerly been swayed exclusively by her own. Glory was his mistress,—France his tutelary divinity.—It was clear that he had no longer a heart or soul for Emiline!

Excusing herself on the plea of indisposition from joining the supper-table of the princess, she passed the evening—the night—in retrospections and anticipations equally painful and perplexing. The weather was calm, the midnight atmosphere clear; and as she strained her eyes in gazing over the trellices and orangeries of the garden towards the horizon of the valley, she could perceive the occasional glancing of lights in the direction of Pietra

Ferzi. And there—even there he dwelt!—*he*—who had so often occupied her thoughts while she gazed listlessly upon that very landscape, and fixed her eyes upon that very spot. So near her, so within the scope of her daily haunts, that he could not but have known of her vicinity, or seen her in her evening rides in the woods skirting the Adda. Camille must have studiously avoided her presence; nay, even when apprised of her appearance at Villa Ferzi, had pointedly *refused* her an interview. Every pulse in the frame of Emiline throbbed at this humiliating instigation of her wounded pride!

A more cheering view of the case suggested that Camille might perhaps have remained as profoundly ignorant of *her* residence at Rezatelli, as she had been of his own. She ran over in her mind the appearance of every stranger whom, since the occupation of the French army, she had observed loitering near the villa.—She tried to recollect the height and bearing of the various officers they had occasionally met skirmishing or idling about the neighbourhood, and whom they had studiously avoided;—in the hope of persuading herself that Mainville, though unwilling to intrude upon her presence or submit to a public interview, had clandestinely indulged himself with the sight of one to whom he had sacrificed so much. But her most sanguine reminiscences afforded no consolation to her mortified spirit. She was forced to admit that the only military straggler she had ever noticed loitering in the neighbourhood of the villa was Achille de Rohan, whose admiration was unquestionably devoted to Madame de Navelles.

As she prepared for rest by closing the casement, Emiline could not refrain from casting her eyes on the mirror on her toilet; and as she removed the profusion of tresses that veiled her countenance, tears started into her eyes as she detected the difference between the Emiline of seven-and-twenty, and the Emiline of seventeen!—*She* did not perceive the brightened intelligence of countenance which superseded its girlish roundness of outline.—*She* was unconscious of the intensity of sensibility modulating its smile into the most exquisite perfection of loveliness.—

She only saw that the dew of morning was no longer on the flower, and turned away and wept the evanescence of its charm.

This mode of passing the night unquestionably wrought no amendment in her looks; for on encountering the Rezatelli family at breakfast, the marchioness was assailed on all sides by the most tender inquiries respecting her health.

"I trust I shall not aggravate the indisposition or provoke the reprehension of madame la marquise," said the sententious Rezatelli, "by acknowledging that, profoundly touched by the sense of deference exhibited by the French commandant of Pietra Ferzi, I have so far overcome my prejudices against the banner his services uphold, as to despatch a messenger to the village, announcing my intention of waiting upon him in the course of the morning, to solicit the honour of receiving him and his colleagues beneath my roof."

"So much the better!" cried Madame de Navelles. "We shall have an opportunity of discovering whether the madcap Major de Rohan be indebted to the partiality of fame for his reputation as a wit."

"And I shall not be sorry for a glimpse of young Canouville," mumbled the good old princess over her chocolate. "I remember his great-grandmother in the circle at the Hôtel de Boufflers, when the late prince my husband was envoy at Paris, after the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle."

"And madame la marquise?" persisted the prince.

"You have judged with admirable discretion as regards the hospitality of the name of Rezatelli, and the duties of a member of the Cisalpine Republic," replied Emiline evasively; satisfying her conscience with a resolution to plead indisposition as a motive for remaining invisible, should the visit of the prince be returned by Mainville and his companions.

During the hours of the prince's absence she could not sufficiently restrain her emotions to remain in the presence of her friends; nor did she rejoin them till her anxiety to

possess herself of every word pronounced by the prince on the subject of his visit recalled her to the saloon.

"The officers of the republican army, madam, honour the Villa Rezatelli by dining here to-morrow," said Rezatelli, in answer to the interrogation of Madame de Navelles. "You will not, however, be molested with the presence of the commandant; who so harshly refused your visit yesterday, and granted your petition only on learning your domestication under my roof. Rapp, the aide-de-camp of General Buonaparte, (who was his guest at the moment of your arrival at Pietra Ferzi,) brought the news of his promotion, and sealed despatches for his care. — General Mainville set off for Paris at daybreak this morning."

Till that moment, Emiline had never honestly confessed to herself how intensely every feeling of her heart was engrossed by the hope of being one day re-united to Camille! —

CHAPTER XIII.

Attendez donc, jeunesse folle!
Nous n'avons pas le temps encore;
Que vient on nous parler d'Arcole,
Et de Wagram, et du Thabor?

Ode a la Colonne.

GRIEVOUS as was this sudden reverse of the prospect on which she had dwelt, her vexation was magnified a thousand fold by the picture of General Mainville's character and habits exhibited by his military brethren, who soon found favourable acceptance at the villa.

"I should not have dared produce this toy in the presence of monsieur le commandant," said Rohan, as he sat with his guitar and his "Vaillant troubadour" effusions, beneath the trellices of the villa. "Mainville is the strangest creature in nature. He will pass a month without a smile, — grim as the Schwarzwald, or the picture of King Agrapant; — then, melt into tears at the sound of one of my serenades. Whenever I want to

cheat him out of a day's leave or some other indulgence, I sing the savageness out of him through the medium of some of Dalayrac's *sensibleries*."

"He is an officer, I understand, high in the confidence of the Directory and of General Buonaparte?" said Léonie.

"Not a finer fellow fights under the tri-color!" cried Rohan. "A soldier of fortune, like the best and bravest of our army. — But what of that? — The hardest sword has least gold on the hilt."

"And will General Mainville prolong his stay at Paris?" — faltered Emiline, turning over the pages of Major de Rohan's music-book, while the blood rushed into her cheeks.

"No, — he has probably already left the city."

"We shall therefore secure the advantage of enlarging our social circle at Rezatelli?" said the prince, with a stiff bow intended to be gracious.

"Again, no! — Mainville's eventual errand is to Friuli —"

"To the Austrian camp, — perhaps the Austrian court!" exclaimed the prince. "Had I been forewarned of this, I might have furnished him with an introduction to the notice of my gracious and illustrious friends the Archduke Ferdinand and his consort!"

"I fancy Wurmser, whose sword my friend Mainville received at the surrender of Mantua, will form a sufficient master of the ceremonies! — But the general is well known to Count Cobentzel; and his mission is supposed to relate to the deliverance of La Fayette from the prison of Olmütz, where somewhat too large a measure of his days has been consumed."

"They are friends of old. — Mainville was formerly his aide-de-camp," observed Emiline, musing aloud.

"You are acquainted then with the general?" — cried Colonel Canouville, astonished by this assertion.

"From report only!" replied the marchioness. But she spoke with so crimson a blush, that Prince Rezatelli felt particularly well satisfied that the commandant of Pietro Ferzi should be on his road towards Udine.

Every day, every hour, tended to raise the absent one

in her estimation. Rohan and Canouville seemed, by a preconcerted signal, to choose the *gestes et faits* of the Soldier of Lyons as their favourite topic. Traits of his romantic valour, his magnanimity, were for ever on their lips. They had but one accusation to make against him.—“He was *très peu François*, — *très peu sensible*!” and there were a thousand allusions to a certain Modenese countess, and a young and noble abbess at Vicenza, whom he had ungraciously disdained among the conquests of the Republic.

It may be supposed that this evidence of the insensibility of Mainville, was not recorded by Emiline among the least of his virtues. Such then was the heart she had rejected! — This warrior, whose laurels were already perpetuated by the hand of history, was the man she had driven with scorn from her presence; — this plenipotentiary between contending nations, was the man she had upbraided with his obscure and nameless existence! — What aggravations to the grievous recollection of having injured the truest and most devoted of friends, — of having alienated the affection of the noblest of human beings! —

“Could the Aulic council have seen Mainville charge at the head of his regiment at Bassano,” said Rohan one day, during the absence of the prince, “Rezatelli’s gracious and illustrious friend the archduke would have confessed at once that his game was up. Mainville’s fine figure in the field is worth a week’s pay to encourage the men.”

“And what is all this to me?” murmured Emiline, as she laid her throbbing head at night upon her pillow. “If there exist a human being divided from my approach and elevated above my sympathy, it is Mainville. — Oh, Camille, Camille! how little did I dream it would ever thus befall between us!”

The marchioness found no difficulty in proving to her satisfaction that it was her duty to court the repetition of every fact connected with the destinies, past, present, and future, of a person so intimately interwoven with her own; and when at length the letters despatched from Camille contained the assurance of permanent peace, not a subject

of France exulted more sincerely in the result of the treaty, than the lovely emigrants of the Villa Rezatelli.

But, alas ! this satisfactory position of public and private affairs was not of long duration. Before Emiline had gathered courage to reveal even to her sister-in-law the identity of Mainville with their own Camille, the ambition of the First Consul had pointed out the scene of Cæsar's triumphs and Alexander's victories as an arena worthy his exploits. The Egyptian expedition was announced, and Mainville, a general of brigade, was soon heard of beneath the walls of Alexandria !

It was some comfort to poor Emiline that he *was* heard of ; for whenever despatches from the East dispersed tidings of the French army over Europe, she was preserved from the wretchedness of suspense by the distinctions sought and found by the brave Mainville in this new avenue to the temple of Fame. Scarcely an action occurred in which his brigade was not pointed out to the gratitude of the Republic. But glory is a miserable balm for the wounds and anxieties of affection ; and willingly would Emiline have exchanged all the laurels of ancient and modern history for the certainty that Mainville would bring back his veterans in person to the shores of Europe. Even when the agitations of war again disturbed the plains of the Milanese, and General Joubert, in command of the army of the Danube, resumed an offensive attitude, her attention was more feebly directed towards its operations, than towards those which pushed the triumphs of the European hosts across the wilds of Syria. The congress of Radstadt was broken up by a political rupture, perpetuating the struggle between the Republic and the Germanic empire. But Emiline appeared unconscious of the frightful prospects emanating from the new coalition formed against her native country. Mainville was lying wounded in a miserable fortress, which Murat had succeeded in wresting from the enemy, between the banks of the Jordan and Mount Thabor !—Camille was expiring in a distant land !

On every side, the armies of the Directory appeared abandoned by the favour of fortune which marked their opening career. Kray and Bellegarde, Suwarrow and Me-

las, afforded a combination too powerful for the resistance of Victor, Massena, and Championnet; nor, till the disasters of the Syrian campaign determined Napoleon to hasten back to Paris, to disconcert the political intrigues created by his absence, did the French eagle resume the impetuosity of its earlier flight. The revolution of the 18th Brumaire placed a corner-stone to the pedestal of his ambition; and on the ruins of the directorial government arose a consulate, composed of Sièyes, Ducos, and Napoleon Buonaparte.

Madame de Navelles, meanwhile, and her sister, removed to Genoa; hoping for some occasion to embark for England. Scarcely, however, had they installed themselves, when Melas advanced to invest, and Massena to defend it against the Austrian troops. The unfortunate sisters found themselves exposed to the horrors of a siege, augmented by the blockade enforced by a British fleet under the command of Lord Keith.

During those weeks of horror, when the cry of the people was great in the city, when eight thousand Austrian prisoners were perishing for lack of food, and when even the palaces of the nobility were provisioned with the flesh of dogs and horses, the welfare of the helpless sisters, who had taken shelter in the convent of the Annunziata, was unremittingly watched by some mysterious protector. Although the whole city suffered the bitterest privations of want, wholesome food was daily supplied to the convent for their use. The abbess and her simple nuns began to regard their French guests as angels vouchsafed by the Virgin as guardians of her flock, while vainly attempting to detect the mysterious source which shed manna on the wilderness for their preservation.

But a new subject of interest was about to engross the mind and heart of Emiline. Scarcely had she recovered her terror and grief sufficiently to form plans of removal, when the event to which allusion has been already made,—the arrival of a courier bearing her a letter from the wife of the First Consul, to announce the miraculous preservation of her child,—transported her into a delirium of joy!—

There was less need of the recommendation contained in Joséphine's epistle that she should set off for Paris without

delay, than for the provident care which had appointed an official and confidential messenger for her protection, with orders to defray the expenses of the journey ; for Emiline and Léonie were scarcely more eager for departure than incapable of surmounting, unassisted, the difficulties of the route. By some friendly interposition, these were wholly obliterated. Their progress was marked by that magical velocity which awaits the influence of money and authority ; and while Madame de St. Florentin was oppressed by emotions too profound to notice the rapturous exclamations of the elated Léonie, they traversed France in the wonder of a dream, and were conducted by their courier to the courtyard of a handsome hotel in the vicinity of the Tuileries.

The agitation of the excited mother had now reached too agonising a pitch to notice whither they were going, or utter a single inquiry. She dared not even mention the name of her child, when she found Monsieur de Rohan waiting at the foot of the stairs to conduct them into a suite of spacious but simple apartments. Insensible to all that was passing round her, she tottered forwards, supported by his arm and encouraging exhortations, till from the door of an inner saloon a tall graceful girl, whom she could scarcely recognise as her infant treasure, rushed to her feet, — hung round her knees, — and blessed her with the endearing name of “ mother ! ”

In such moments, there stirs in the human heart a sensation too acute for joy. Emiline was conscious only of suffocation and agony ; and it was some time before she sufficiently resumed her self-possession to fold her two children together to her bosom, with a prayer of thanksgiving to the Almighty hand which had preserved them to its affections ; or to perceive that the scene had other witnesses than Léonie and Achille de Rohan, who were too much engrossed with each other to be curiously observant. To one of the females whom she now perceived standing near her, demonstrating the sincerity of their sympathy with tears of joy, Emiline needed no introduction. The simple guise, — the warm motherly smile, — the grey locks surrounding her reverend face, were those of her own Madelon ; — and towards the other, even before little Emiline

whispered the beloved name of Joséphine, the heart of Madame de St. Florentin beat with an unaccountable interest.

"Forgive me," whispered the graceful wife of the First Consul,—"forgive me for being selfishly unwilling to deprive myself of the gratifying spectacle of your first meeting with our child. No, no!" she continued, turning away from the outpouring of the mother's enthusiastic gratitude—"not a word of thanks, or my intrusion will indeed stand reproved!—My friend Madame Valazy shall be my delegate to answer your inquiries. But remember I insist upon your taking rest and refreshment. Emiline shall remain in your arms—close—close to your heart,—while you try to sleep. But I must have you recover all your strength and beauty. For to-morrow I trust that Madame de St. Florentin and Madame de Navelles will grace my evening circle, and afford me the happiness of proving to the First Consul how readily they have profited by his erasure of their names from the lists of proscription, to return to France.

Affectionately embracing her little charge, Madame Buonaparte hastened to free both child and mother from the restraint of her presence; and Madelon was also about to quit the chamber, when Emiline, throwing her arms round her neck, drew her back to the sofa.

"Can you forgive me?"—she whispered, tenderly embracing her.

"I once thought not, my own dear child," faltered Madame Valazy through her tears. "But I had not then heard your voice.—I had not looked on your beloved face, my more than daughter!"

"And Camille?"—hesitated Emiline, as her heart thrilled with joy on seeing her two dear girls entwined in each other's arms in sisterly fondness, mingled with the shy coyness of long estrangement.

"Ah!" replied Madame Valazy, mournfully waving her head, and pressing the hands of her foster-child between her own,—“let us not talk of my son. It is the only subject which could raise a cloud of misunderstanding between our hearts!"

CHAPTER XIV.

What wants this knave
That a king should have?

*Johnny Armstrong.**

MADAME DE ST. FLORENTIN had been too intimately habituated to the purlieus of the courts of kings, to entertain any feeling of awe at the prospect of presentation in the circle of the Tuileries; and her heart was so filled with the measureless content of finding in her Emiline the promise of gifts and endowments beyond even the sanguine anticipation of a mother's partiality, that she saw the evening approach without apprehension. With her eyes fixed on her rescued treasure,—her first-born restored as from the grave,—she suffered Léonie to arrange the preparations of her toilet without interference; and on the conclusion of its weighty labours, scarcely permitted herself to cast a glance of gratified vanity on those profuse and glossy tresses which had been officiously braided into the Grecian fashion of the hour.

But her indifference was amply compensated by the enthusiasm of Madame de Navelles, who was almost as vain of her sister as of herself; and quite as vain of herself, as the infatuated adoration of Rohan could render her.

“Are we not charming?” cried Léonie, as her now privileged admirer presented himself, to accompany them to the antechamber of the consular palace. “Emiline’s eyes are too full of tears to perceive that she is metamorphosed into an Athenian as fair as Aspasia.”

But Emiline’s heart was fuller than her eyes. She did not even hear the giddy apostrophe of Léonie. The mere sound of “Aux Tuileries!” given as an order to the coachman, saddened her spirit. The dear ones of her youth—the loved—the dead—were painfully connected with that memorable name!

"Let me dwell only on the mercy of Heaven in preserving my children to my affection," said she, as the carriage entered the fatal court-yard of the château.

She heard not the explanations of consular etiquette whispered by Rohan. She observed not, on ascending the grand staircase, how much of regal ceremonial had been renewed in the household of Buonaparte.

In another minute, Emiline and Léonie were ushered through the brilliant antechamber, glittering with uniforms and a splendour of pageantry little accordant with the simplicity of a republican government, into a saloon, of which the circle was formed of the wives of the ministers,—the diplomatic foreign residents,—the immediate family of Napoleon,—and a large assemblage of the literary luminaries of the day. A place was made for them by the side of Hortense; and their attention directed towards Madame Buonaparte, who was making the tour of the circle, with a smile and a word of graciousness for every individual whom the policy of the First Consul rendered it necessary to conciliate, and a still sweeter glance of intelligence for those endeared to her by the tenderness of private friendship. A general murmur of admiration followed the tranquil elegance of her movements; and when, in the course of her complimentary attentions, she paused before Madame de St. Florentin and her sister-in-law, and in terms of formal condescension expressed her satisfaction in welcoming them to the palace of the consulate, a hundred hearts beat enviously at the distinction.

"The First Consul is too much fatigued to make his appearance in this crowd to-night," whispered Mademoiselle Beauharnois, addressing Emiline and Léonie, by command of her mother; "but I am desired to inform you that he will have the honour of receiving your presentation in the private apartments."

This arrangement was welcomed by Madame de St. Florentin as a happy amendment on the necessity of receiving the abrupt and perplexing notice of the conqueror of Italy, under the scrutiny of so extensive an assembly; and while following the guidance of Rohan through a suite of brilliantly illuminated but unfrequented apart-

ments, she received his congratulations on this mark of signal favour on the part of the Consul.

The *battans* of ceremony flew open on the approach of the two beautiful women ushered by a person so high in consular favour as Achille de Rohan; and having passed the anteroom and saloon, they found themselves in the exquisite retreat of regal luxury, recently restored and embellished by the elegant taste of Joséphine.

Some half-dozen privileged persons were already assembled to wait the arrival of its tutelary deity; gathered into a knot, in eager discussion of the scandal of the hour, — in criticism of the costumes which had graced the evening circle, — in recapitulation of the smiles bestowed by Madame Buonaparte, — and all the thousand less than nothingnesses which engage the interest and suggest the manœuvres and cabals of the little great.

The first person who attracted their attention was the beautiful Pauline, in conversation with an officer in a brilliant military uniform, whose back was turned towards the door.

"Who are these?" inquired Pauline, in a tone of brusque ill-breeding, better becoming the wife of the republican Leclercq. than the palace of the Tuileries. "New favourites from the Caribbean latitudes?"

"The daughter and widow of the two last Dukes of Navelles," replied a voice that penetrated to the inmost heart of Emiline; and her emotions did not diminish, when the officer with whom Madame Leclercq had been conversing, turned towards her with a bow of the most chilling and deferential reserve, and displayed the countenance of General Mainville.

"Navelles, — and emigrants?" — cried Pauline with a scornful smile. "What are such people doing here?"

"Obeying the invitation of General Buonaparte," replied Mainville, with a dianness of manner which repressed the flippancy of the fair querist; and he instantly quitted the room, while Pauline, with the coarseness of upstart pride, retired into a group of her intimate associates to criticise the beauty, and challenge the pretensions

of these unexpected rivals. Emiline found herself enduring all the humiliation of supercilious feminine scrutiny, in a spot where her smile had once been omnipotent, and her conventional rank a panoply of impunity. She noticed nothing, however, with so grievous a pang as the abrupt disappearance of Mainville. He had not even deigned to remain in the same apartment with one so abhorrent to his feelings.

No sooner did Madame Buonaparte enter the apartment, than its petty cabal and their malicious whisperings were silenced. Lucien and his sisters crowded to tender their hollow assiduities to a sister-in-law whose wedded life they embittered with unceasing jealousies ; — and when they perceived the air of cordiality with which Joséphine advanced towards Madame St. Florentin and Léonie, and invited them to seats by her side, the sycophants of the incipient court were as eager to extend their notice to the new comers, as they had been forward to molest them by impertinence and hauteur.

After a few minutes, the folding-doors were again thrown open ; and the First Consul was announced in a loud voice by the page in waiting. But though the female groups scattered through the apartments distinctly perceived his entrance, Caroline and Pauline were too intimately acquainted with the habits of their brother, to intrude one step beyond the limits of familiarity he had traced for the routine of his daily life at the Tuileries. Napoleon must be permitted to exhaust all the topics of communication he might wish to address to Joséphine, before his attention was claimed by the members of his own family.

On the present occasion, these topics chanced to be of a very comprehensive character. Napoleon had entered the room conversing with Bourrienne and Fouché, on the subject of the sailing of the discovery ships commanded by Freycinet, which was on the point of taking place ; and with the signal disregard to the courtesies of life he was apt to display towards women whom he honoured neither with personal passion nor personal hatred, he compelled Joséphine to bestow her attention on his diffuse anti-

cipations of the wonders to arise from a philosophical expedition projected under the auspices of the Republic, before he granted her an opportunity of presenting her two female companions, who were standing to wait his pleasure.

Even when he consented to abstract his consideration from the charts to be submitted to the Capitaine Baudin and his convoy, he fixed his stern and full-orbed glance on the graceful and beautiful woman designated by his wife as "the mother of our Emiline," in a manner any thing but conciliatory or re-assuring. Something between curiosity and scorn tempered the expression of his countenance.

So long as Buonaparte had limited his attention and discourse to the route of Le Géographe, and La Cazuarina, Emiline regarded him in her turn with a species of trembling deference, as the man who had dictated terms to the Vatican, and issued his mandates beneath the shadow of the Pyramids! But when, crossing his hands behind his back, he bent on her countenance that species of overbearing scrutiny so graceless when exercised for the intimidation of a woman, the spirit of her ancient line invigorated her courage. Elevating her noble figure to its utmost height, she prepared herself to answer with self-possession the interrogations of the First Consul.

"Your name, I understand, has been recently erased from the list of emigrants, at the request of my wife. Is it your intention, madam, to reside for the future in the metropolis of the Republic?" said Buonaparte, scanning the figure of the marchioness from head to foot.

"My little girl, *Citoyen Consul*, replied Emiline, in a low, but steady voice, "would find it a painful trial to separate herself from her mother by the ties of nature, or her mother by the ties of gratitude."

"You were at Milan, I think, when Madame Buonaparte was resident at Montebello. Had you profited by the occasion to seek re-instalment in your rights as a citizen of the French republic, those double ties of maternal affection would not have remained so long disunited," was his stern rejoinder.

"I have to regret my ignorance," said the gracious Joséphine, eager to heal the wounds inflicted by the harsh abruptness of the First Consul, "that I had countrywomen resident at Rezatelli, whom it was so much my interest to attract to Montebello, by making the first advances to their friendship. When next we visit Milan," continued Joséphine, in a lower tone, as if apprehensive of being overheard by the circle in the adjoining room, "I conclude that *Princess* Rezatelli will not refuse us the hospitalities of her villa, when we perform a pilgrimage to Como?"

"Princess Rezatelli, madam, expired a few days previous to the contest at Marengo," observed Emiline in some surprise.

"Nay! I alluded to the future bride of the new governor of the capital of the Cisalpine Republic," retorted Joséphine with a smile.

"To yourself!" said Napoleon, sternly, who had no leisure to waste on the circumlocution of superfluous delicacy.

"The hospitalities of Villa Rezatelli will doubtless be humbly devoted to the acceptance of the First Consul and his representatives," replied Emiline, mildly. "But for me — I have not — I can never have, either interest or authority in their distribution. Since you deign, madam, to interest your attention in the fortunes of so obscure an individual, suffer me to declare that I have no longer a heart or hand with which to requite the friendly protection of a man so respectable, but so perfectly indifferent to my feelings, as Prince Rezatelli."

The blood rushed to the face, neck, and arms of Madame de St. Florentin as this painful avowal was forced from her; and so absorbing was her emotion that she did not perceive Joséphine gliding away from the ottoman by which they were standing, and beckoning some person from the group in the adjoining chamber.

"I must address myself to this lady for an explanation of the enigma," said the Consul, turning towards Madame de Navelles, whose simplicity of air and feature captivated his attention.

"Permit me to beg that you will require it from my-

self," said Emiline, striving to resume her composure. "However humiliating the confession, I am bound to acknowledge myself the rejected and offending wife of one whose name I trust to your courtesy to pass over without inquiry."

"No, madam," said the First Consul, softening in his manner towards her, on perceiving her changeful colour and tremulous voice, — "I cannot pass over a fact momentous to the happiness of a justly-valued friend. If General Mainville —"

"Spare me this trial!" cried Emiline, with streaming eyes and clasped hands. "I beseech you spare me the humiliation of claiming a connexion disavowed by his just resentment!"

"Emiline, — my own, — my wife!" cried Mainville, who was already at her feet. And he seized her unresisting hands, while the First Consul took a protracted pinch of snuff, and Emiline replied by bending over him and concealing her tears upon his shoulder.

"Rise, Mainville!" — said Buonaparte, who was not particularly indulgent to exhibitions of sensibility. "As the oldest of your friends, I claim a priority for my congratulations. Make haste, madam," said he, taking the hand of Emiline and placing it in that of her lover, — "make haste to celebrate your second nuptials, for the Republic cannot long spare the services of one of the best and bravest of her sons. Gentlemen!" he exclaimed to Victor, Berthier, Murat, Fouché, and Bourrienne, who now, at the summons of Joséphine, displayed their group of brilliant uniforms in the back ground. "Caroline, Pauline! — I claim your friendship and congratulations for the distinguished bride of my friend, General Mainville, — relying upon you to assist Madame Buonaparte in rendering the circle of the Tuileries attractive to them both."

Fortunately for the embarrassment of Emiline, the announcement of the evening collation withdrew the general attention from her tears, as well as from the triumphant delight with which they were pointed out by Léonie to Achille de Rohan.

History records, however, that they were the last she

had occasion to shed on Camille's account ; for throughout the annals of the imperial court of the Tuileries we find no brighter example of conjugal happiness than that afforded by Field Marshal and the Princesse de —, or as they were known in less auspicious times, by Emiline and the SOLDIER OF LYONS.

THE END.

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